MARVEL

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

THE GAUNTLET

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION VOL. 1

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

THE GAUNTLET

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION VOL. 1

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN
THE GAUNTLET

DARK REIGN: THE LIST — AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1

Writer: **DAN SLOTT**
Penciler: **ADAM KUBERT**
Inker: **MARK MORALES**
Colorist: **DEAN WHITE**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **ADAM KUBERT** & **DEAN WHITE**

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #2
"GAUNTLET ORIGINS: ELECTRO"

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **BARRY KITSON**
Inker: **VICTOR OLAZABA**
Colorist: **JEROMY COX**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **JELENA KEVIC DJURDJEVIĆ**
PANELS FROM *AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #9*
BY STAN LEE & STEVE DITKO

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #612-614

Writer: **MARK WAID**
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Colorist: **DAVE STEWART**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **MARKO DJURDJEVIĆ**

"THE OTHER WOMAN"

Writer: **JOE KELLY**
Artist: **JM KEN NIIMURA**

"THE IRRITABLE J. JONAH JAMESON"

Writer: **TOM PEYER**
Artist: **JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**
Letterer: **JARED K. FLETCHER**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #615-616

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **JAVIER PULIDO**
Colorist: **JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **PAOLO RIVERA**

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #3
"GAUNTLET ORIGINS: RHINO"

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **NICK DRAGOTTA**
Cover Art: **JELENA KEVIC DJURDJEVIĆ**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #617

Writer: **JOE KELLY**
Artist: **MAX FIUMARA**
Colorist: **FABIO D'AURIA**
Cover Art: **MAX FIUMARA**

"THE WALK"

Writer: **JOE KELLY**
Artist: **JAVIER PULIDO**
Colorist: **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH**
Letterer: **VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA**

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #4
"GAUNTLET ORIGINS: MYSTERIO"

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **BARRY KITSON**
Colorist: **JEROMY COX**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **JELENA KEVIC DJURDJEVIĆ**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #618-620

Writer: **DAN SLOTT**
Artists: **MARCOS MARTIN** WITH **JAVIER PULIDO** (#620)
Colorist: **JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **MARCOS MARTIN**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #621

Writer: **DAN SLOTT**
Penciler: **MICHAEL LARK**
Inker: **STEFANO GAUDIANO**
Colorist: **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH**
Cover Art: **ED McGUINNESS**, **DEXTER VINES** & **MORRY HOLLOWELL**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #622
"IT IS THE LIFE"

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **JOE QUINONES**

"STAGES OF GRIEF"

Writer: **GREG WEISMAN**
Artist: **LUKE ROSS**
Colorist: **ROB SCHWAGER**

Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **SIMONE BIANCHI** & **SIMONE PERUZZI**

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #5
"GAUNTLET ORIGINS: VULTURE"

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **FRANCIS PORTELA**
Colorist: **CHRIS SOTOMAYOR**
Letterer: **RUS WOOTON**
Cover Art: **JELENA KEVIC DJURDJEVIĆ**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #623-624

Writer: **MARK WAID** WITH **TOM PEYER**
Artist: **PAUL AZACETA** WITH **JAVIER RODRÍGUEZ** (#623)
Colorist: **ANDRES MOSSA**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **MICHAEL LARK** & **JODI WYNNE**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #625

Writer: **JOE KELLY**
Artist: **MAX FIUMARA**
Colorist: **FABIO D'AURIA**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **MARKO DJURDJEVIĆ**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #626

Writer: **FRED VAN LENTE**
Artist: **MICHAEL GAYDOS**
Colorist: **FABIO D'AURIA**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
Cover Art: **MIKE DEL MUNDO**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #37
"THE SPIDER AND THE SHIELD"

Writer: **KARL KESEL**
Artist: **PAULO SIQUEIRA**
Colorist: **FABIO D'AURIA**
Letterer: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

"MAKE MINE MARVEL"

Writer: **KURT BUSIEK**
Artist: **PAT OLLIFFE**
Colorist: **STEVE BUCCELLATO**
Letterer: **COMICRAFT**

Cover Art: **MARCOS MARTIN**

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DARK REIGN: THE LIST — AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1

WHILE ATTENDING A DEMONSTRATION IN RADIOLOGY, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PETER PARKER WAS BITTEN BY A SPIDER WHICH HAD ACCIDENTALLY BEEN EXPOSED TO RADIOACTIVE RAYS. THROUGH A MIRACLE OF SCIENCE, PETER SOON FOUND THAT HE HAD GAINED THE SPIDER'S POWERS...AND HAD IN EFFECT BECOME A HUMAN SPIDER!

FROM THAT DAY ON HE WAS...

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT SKRULL INVASION, THE WORLD HAS CHANGED. NORMAN OSBORN, FORMERLY KNOWN AS SPIDER-MAN'S LONGTIME NEMESIS, THE GREEN GOBLIN, WAS SEEN ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE AS A DECISIVE LEADER AND EVEN TOOK THE KILL SHOT ON THE SKRULL QUEEN THAT ENDED THE WAR. SINCE THAT DAY, HE'S BEEN HANDED CONTROL OVER ALL THINGS SUPERHUMAN IN THE UNITED STATES.

HE DISSOLVED S.H.I.E.L.D. AND FORMED HIS OWN ORGANIZATION, H.A.M.M.E.R. HE WAS GIVEN CONTROL OF THE FIFTY STATE INITIATIVE AND STOCKED THE SUPER HERO TEAMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY WITH HIS OWN AGENTS, AND EVEN BUILT HIS OWN AVENGERS TEAM, MADE UP MOSTLY OF HIS VILLAINOUS COHORTS FROM THE THUNDERBOLTS, AND LED BY NORMAN HIMSELF, IN A RED, WHITE AND BLUE ARMOR DUBBED THE IRON PATRIOT.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, THIS HAS LEFT PETER PARKER NONPLUSSED. AGAIN ON THE OUTS WITH THE LAW - A LAW HIS ARCHENEMY NOW ENFORCES - SPIDER-MAN SET OUT A FEW MONTHS BACK TO TAKE NORMAN DOWN, ABOUT THE SAME TIME THAT NORMAN SET OUT TO MAKE HIS SON (AND PETER'S BEST FRIEND) HARRY INTO AMERICAN SON, HIS OWN CAPTAIN AMERICA. PETER FAILED TO DEFEAT OSBORN, BUT NORMAN IN TURN FAILED TO CORRUPT HIS SON. BETTER, NORAH WINTERS, PETER'S COLLEAGUE FROM THE INTREPID *FRONT LINE* NEWSPAPER, MANAGED TO SNEAK INTO OSBORN'S HQ AND GET SOME CRUCIAL EVIDENCE TO USE AGAINST OSBORN. NORAH WAS INTIMIDATED BY OSBORN'S THUGS INTO KEEPING SILENT - BUT THE TRUTH ALWAYS FINDS A WAY OUT.

DAN SLOTT
WRITER

ADAM KUBERT
PENCILS

MARK MORALES
INKS

DEAN WHITE
COLORS

VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA
LETTERING

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I'VE MADE A LIST.

SPIDEY'S TOP TEN WAYS NORMAN OSBORN TOOK OVER AMERICA.

MY NUMBER EIGHT: "*RUBBED MAGIC LAMP*".

SURE, WE ALL KNOW HOW HE ***REALLY*** DID IT. HE FIRED THE SHOT THAT SAVED US ALL FROM A SKRULL INVASION.

AND EVERYONE WAS ***SO*** GRATEFUL THEY PUT HIM IN CHARGE OF ***EVERYTHING!*** BUT, C'MON, DOES ***ANYONE*** BUY THAT?

THAT'S WHY I'M LEANING TOWARDS NUMBER THREE: "*STUPID PILLS*".

HOW ELSE CAN YOU EXPLAIN IT? WE'RE TALKING ***NORMAN OSBORN!***

THE MAN'S A PSYCHO! A KILLER! HE'S THE GREEN FREAKIN' GOBLIN FOR GOD'S SAKE!

I GOT A CRUSH ON OSBORN!

BUT WRAP HIM IN A FULL-BODY ***FLAG PIN...***

...REPACKAGE HIM AS ***"THE IRON PATRIOT"...***

...AND EVERYONE'S OKAY WITH IT.

WHICH BRINGS US TO SPIDEY'S ***NUMBER ONE*** REASON NORMAN OSBORN IS RUNNING THE SHOW:

ME! I LET HIM GET AWAY WITH ***ALL*** OF THIS!

WELL GUESS WHAT, WORLD, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! IT'S TIME!

TIME SOMEONE SHOWED YOU HIS ***REAL*** COLORS. TIME SOMEONE LET YOU KNOW THAT...

Brooklyn, The Offices Of Front Line.

NORMAN OSBORN IS A THREAT! A MENACE!

THAT'S A GREAT HEADLINE, PETE. BUT I THINK WE'LL NEED MORE THAN THAT TO RUN A BLISTERING EXPOSÉ.

NEVER STOPPED JONAH.

YOU, PARKER, ARE NO J. JONAH JAMESON.

SOMETHING I'M ETERNALLY GRATEFUL FOR.

FOCUS, PEOPLE. ROBBIE, TELL ME WHAT WE'VE GOT.

NOTHING INCRIMINATING. ONCE OSBORN GAINED ACCESS TO NATIONAL SECURITY, HIS SLATE WAS WIPED CLEAN.

OOH, LOOK! HE DOESN'T RECYCLE.

TRUST ME, NORAH, THE GUY'S AS GREEN AS THEY COME. AND PURPLE.

WE CAN'T PUSH THE GOBLIN ANGLE. HE'S COVERED ON THAT END. WE NEED SOMETHING ELSE.

WHAT ABOUT THE PROMETHEUS TRIALS? HE HAD DOZENS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS CHAINED UP AT THE OSCORP PLANT OVER IN JERSEY.*

AND HE WAS PERFORMING ALL KINDS OF SICK, HUMAN EXPERIMENTS. IF SPIDER-MAN HADN'T COME TO THE RESCUE...

...OSBORN WOULD STILL BE GOING ALL JOSEF MENGELE ON 'EM. THE MAN'S A MONSTER, BEN!

SEE ASM #568-573-- NEW WAYS TO DIE. --STEVE.

I KNOW, I WAS THERE TOO. BUT IT'S NO USE. ALL THE INJURED PARTIES ARE HERE ILLEGALLY. NONE OF THEM ARE WILLING TO STEP FORWARD.

AND EVEN IF THEY DID, NORMAN GOT AHEAD OF THAT STORY AND SHIFTED ALL THE BLAME ONTO HIS SON, HARRY.

NOW, NORAH, YOU HAD A LINE THAT HE KEPT THOSE TRIALS GOING...?

YEAH. AS PART OF HIS "AMERICAN SON PROGRAM."*

THE BASTARD WAS RUNNING IT RIGHT OUT OF AVENGERS TOWER. I MANAGED TO GET IN THERE, BUT...

...HE FOUND ME OUT. HE INTERCEPTED ALL THE DIRT I WAS GATHERING. HELL, I'M LUCKY TO BE ALIVE.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS

SEE ASM #594-599-- AMERICAN SON. --STEVE II.

THE ONE THING I CAN TELL YOU, THEY HAD SURVEILLANCE *EVERYWHERE*. THERE *HAS* TO BE FOOTAGE OF IT.

I DUNNO. WHY WOULD HE BE STUPID ENOUGH TO KEEP ANY OF IT ON FILE?

TWO REASONS. ONE: HE'S AN EGOMANIAC. HE'D NEVER DESTROY *ANYTHING* WITH HIS IMAGE ON IT.

AND TWO: HE'S SO DELUSIONAL HE PROBABLY BELIEVES HE'D NEVER GET CAUGHT.

THAT'S NOT SO CRAZY. SECURITY AT AVENGERS TOWER'S GOTTA BE TIGHT.

ESPECIALLY AFTER ALL THEIR RECENT BREAK-INS. I DOUBT EVEN SPIDER-MAN COULD--

MAYBE THERE'S ANOTHER WAY. WHILE I WAS UNDERCOVER, I SWITCHED SOME PACKING LABELS IN THE MAILROOM...

...NOW OSCORP HAS MY CUBICLE'S *"HANG IN THERE KITTY"* POSTER UNDER LOCK AND KEY. AND WE HAVE THIS...

...SECRET BLUE-PRINTS TO OSCORP'S MANHATTAN OFFICES. INCLUDING AN AREA MARKED FOR BACKUP RECORDS.

SECRET? WHAT MAKES 'EM DIFFERENT FROM WHAT WE COULD GET AT THE CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE BRAINIAC, PARKER. DO THE MATH.

SHE'S RIGHT. THESE NUMBERS COME UP SHORT.

AND IF WHAT I KNOW ABOUT OSBORN HOLDS TRUE...

"...HE'S GOT A HIDDEN CACHE UP THERE, OR MAYBE EVEN ONE OF HIS SECRET LABS."

AND WHAT'S IN THIS ONE, SIR?

SOME PET PROJECTS, MS. HAND. LITTLE THINGS I'VE BEEN TOYING WITH OVER THE YEARS.

OSCORP

CERTAIN... COUNTERMEASURES FOR AN ELUSIVE PEST PROBLEM.

AH. ITEM EIGHT ON YOUR TO-DO LIST.

WHAT CAN I SAY? I'VE SAVED THE BEST FOR LAST.

TONIGHT I'M GOING TO KILL THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN.

TEST SUBJECT 32B: EQUAL PARTS GOBLIN FORMULA AND SUPER SOLDIER SERUM...

DOWNLOADING 10%

THE BEST? BUT SIR...

I KNOW. THE BUG DOESN'T EVEN FACTOR INTO MY GREATER PLANS.

ALPHA CLEARANCE ACCEPTED. PROCEED.

AHHHH

THE REACTION IS ALMOST INSTANTANEOUS. INTERESTING.

DOWNLOADING 35%

I FAIL TO SEE THE PURPOSE OF ALL THIS.

PURPOSE? THIS ISN'T A TASK, VICTORIA...

OH GOD, MAKE IT STOP!!!

DOWNLOADING 70%

...IT'S A REWARD.

VOICE PRINT RECOGNIZED. OMEGA CLEARANCE ACCEPTED.

YOU MAY ENTER.

BEGINNING VIVISECTION. HMM. CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT'S INSIDE.

AHHHH

DOWNLOADING 95%

AHHHHH--

DOWNLOADED 100%

RESTRICTED

Level - 13

LOOK! NAKED BELGIANS!

WHAT?!!

SNATCH!

YOINK!

AND AWAY!

GET BACK HERE!

SURE THING. STAY RIGHT HERE.

I'LL DO A LAP AND COME BACK FOR YA.

GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL

THIS'S IT. FOR ALL THE MARBLES! I'VE GOT THE GOODS ON YOU, OSBORN!

NOW I'VE JUST GOT TO LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO GET THESE FILES INTO THE RIGHT HANDS.

I SHOULD THANK YOU, BUG.

YOU JUST SAVED ME THE TROUBLE OF HUNTING YOU DOWN!

WELL YOU KNOW ME, I AIM TO--

WHOA! ONE SEC!

SPEAKING OF AIMING, NORMIE, YOU SHOULD TRY IT SOME TIME!

STAND BACK, CITIZENS! I AM ATTEMPTING TO CAPTURE THE FUGITIVE--

--AND KNOWN TERRORIST: SPIDER-MAN!

FOR YOUR SAFETY, PLEASE KEEP THE AREA CLEAR.

NICE TRY, CAPTAIN FLAG PIN.

YOU THINK THEY'LL FALL FOR THAT AFTER THEY SAW ME--

UP YOURS, WEB-HEAD!

GET HIM, PATRIOT!

OSBORN!

STUPID PILLS!

YOU'RE ALL TAKING LOTS AND LOTS OF STUPID PILLS!

GET USED TO IT, BUG. THIS IS THE WAY THE WORLD IS NOW. MY WORLD.

YEAH? WELL, I DON'T HAVE TO STAND HERE AND TAKE THIS.

LITERALLY.

UNI-BEAM. TRACKING MODE.

FIRE!

AAHH!

I'VE BEEN ON THE RECEIVING END OF ONE OF IRON MAN'S UNI-BEAMS BEFORE.

AND IT *HURTS!*

IT ALWAYS HURTS.

BUT THIS TIME?

NOT QUITE AS MUCH.

WHAT GIVES?

THE DESIGN. YOU ALTERED STARK'S DESIGN.

HIS UNI-BEAM WAS ALWAYS A SIMPLE SHAPE, A CIRCLE OR A TRAPEZOID...

BUT YOU HAD TO HAVE A--

OW!

CRACK!

WE GOT 'IM, PATRIOT!

MESS WITH NEW YORK?!

EAT IT, WALL-CRAWLER!

PEOPLE, PLEASE! I HAVE THIS.

I APPRECIATE THAT YOU WANT TO DO YOUR CIVIC DUTY.

BUT THIS IS STILL A NATION OF LAWS.

AND AS A LICENSED SUPER HERO, IT'S MY SWORN DUTY TO--

NO WAY!

YOU HAVE GOT TO BE FREAKIN' KIDDING ME!

THIS IS NEWS 4...

REPORTING AT THE SCENE OF A BATTLE...

FWOK

...BETWEEN NORMAN "THE IRON PATRIOT" OSBORN...

"...AND THE MASKED VIGILANTE KNOWN AS SPIDER-MAN! COMING AT YOU LIVE FROM MIDTOWN!"

C'MON, SPIDEY! BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF HIM!

NORAH, AT FRONT LINE, WE'RE JOURNALISTS. AND WE STRIVE TO BE IMPARTIAL AND FAIR-MINDED.

WHO'RE YOU KIDDING, BEN? WE'RE A LEFTY RAG AND PROUD OF IT.

AH, YOU'RE RIGHT. KICK HIS TEETH IN, WEB-HEAD!

GO PATRIOT!

YOU WATCHING THIS? HE JUST PICKED UP A TRUCK!

IS THE DRIVER STILL IN THERE?

DUDE, IRON PATRIOT'S A HERO. HE WATCHES OUT FOR EVERYBODY.

CAN'T BELIEVE I'M SAYING THIS...

GET UP, SPIDEY! DON'T JUST SIT THERE! *FIGHT BACK!*

THAT'S IT. GAME OVER!

THE BOSS'LL PROBABLY WANT A COPY. MS. HAND, SHOULD WE BE TAPING THIS?

JUST THE OPPOSITE. WE'RE WIPING EVERY FILE ON THIS TERMINAL.

I WILL NOT HAVE A REPEAT OF TONIGHT, GENTLEMEN. NO LOOSE ENDS.

I COULDN'T ASK FOR A BETTER ENDING TO OUR STORY. NOT ONLY DID I GET TO WIN...

...BUT THE PEOPLE WERE WITH ME! AND HISTORY?...

HISTORY WILL SAY YOU WERE THE VILLAIN HERE. AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT WILL SAY ABOUT ME--

THAT--THAT YOU LOOK LIKE YOU SWALLOWED A BARBERSHOP POLE?

A COMEDIAN TO THE END. I WOULDN'T HAVE IT ANY OTHER WAY. DO YOU HEAR THAT?

I'M SWITCHING MY UNI-BEAM TO A MAGNETIC FREQUENCY.

HUMMMMMMMMMM

I'M GOING TO FRY YOUR BRAIN AND THAT FLASH DRIVE OF YOURS AT THE SAME TIME. THE ONLY QUESTION LEFT IS...

WHAT POSE? I'M SURE YOUR FRIEND, PARKER, IS AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE, SNAPPING HIS PICTURES.

MMMMMMMMMMMM

YOU ALWAYS DID WORRY ABOUT APPEARANCES, NORMAN.

MMMMMMMMMMM

WHAT'S THIS? STILL A LITTLE FIGHT LEFT IN YOU?

JUST ENOUGH...

MMMMMMMMMMM

...FOR ONE LAST PLAY!

MMMM CRAACK!

PATHETIC!

FWACK!

LOOKS THAT WAY. BUT LOOKS CAN BE DECEIVING.

LIKE THAT STAR. ON THE SURFACE...

...IT'S A POWERFUL SYMBOL.

ON THE SURFACE OF A UNI-BEAM?

KRAKOOM

IT CAUSES HEAT BUILD-UP OVER YOUR EXTERNAL PORT.

THWPPPPPPPP

AND ALL IT TOOK WAS ONE CRACK IN THE RIGHT SPOT...

...TO HAVE IT ALL BACKFIRE ON YOU.

=KAFF=
=KOFF=

DAMN IT!

JUST HAVE TO FOLLOW THE WEBS.

THEY'LL TAKE ME STRAIGHT TO HIM!

HE CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN...

...FAR.

STOP AND THINK. PRIORITIES...

SPIDER-MAN IS NOT THE ISSUE HERE. IT'S THE FLASH DRIVE. WHERE WOULD HE TAKE...?

DOESN'T EVEN HAVE TO BE THE BUG HIMSELF.

HE COULD HAVE ALREADY PAWNED IT OFF ON ONE OF HIS COMPATRIOTS. THAT **BRANT** WOMAN OR...

C'MON, C'MON, C'MON...

...PARKER!

HEY, LOOK!

NOT FALLING FOR THAT TWICE IN ONE--

IT'S NORMAN OSBORN! THE *IRON PATRIOT!*

NO WAY!

IT *IS* HIM!

CAN I HAVE A PICTURE WITH YOU, MAN?

I LOVE YOU!

THIS'S GONNA BE MY SCREEN SAVER!

PATRIOT!

MR. OSBORN! OVER HERE!

CAN YOU SIGN THIS?

I'M YOUR *BIGGEST* FAN!

PATRIOT, YOU *ROCK!*

NORM!

...AAAND SEND!

COPYING

UPLOAD

CANCEL

SEND

TEST SUBJECT 32B: EQUAL PARTS GOBLIN FORMULA AND SUPER SOLDIER SERUM...

AHHHH

THE REACTION IS ALMOST INSTANTANEOUS. INTERESTING.

AHHHH

OH GOD! MAKE IT STOP!!!

BEGINNING VIVISECTION.

AHHHH!

HMM. CAN'T WAIT TO SEE WHAT'S INSIDE.

TURN THAT OFF!

PCHAW

POKK

ZAKK

KASHH

NICE TRY, NORMAN. BUT ALONG WITH THESE TERMINALS, THOSE FILES WENT OUT TO MY ENTIRE FRIENDS LIST.

MOST OF 'EM WORK IN THE MEDIA. AND THE REST ARE TECH-HEADS.

SO RIGHT NOW, THIS FOOTAGE IS GOIN' OUT *ALL* OVER THE INTERNET.

STAND CLEAR, EVERYONE. THIS MAN DOCTORED THAT FOOTAGE!

HE'S NOTORIOUS! AND A KNOWN ACCOMPLICE OF SPIDER-MAN! HE'S--

HMMMM

PRO UPLOADED

I'LL TELL YOU WHO I AM.

I'M PETER PARKER!

AND I'M A *TAXPAYING AMERICAN CITIZEN!*

YOU'RE NOT A "*MAN OF THE PEOPLE*," OSBORN. YOU'RE "*THE MAN*".

AND YOU CAN PUSH AROUND LAWLESS VIGILANTES LIKE SPIDER-MAN ALL YOU WANT.

BUT HERE, IN THE GOOD OL' U. S. OF A., WHEN IT COMES TO AN EVERYMAN LIKE PETER BENJAMIN PARKER...

...YOU WORK FOR *ME!*

SO? WHAT IF THOSE ***WERE*** DOCTORED IMAGES? SUE ME. FILE A CIVIL CASE AGAINST ME.

SHORT OF THAT, WHAT ***ARE*** YOU GOING TO DO? THROW ME IN GITMO? OR THE NEGATIVE ZONE? YOU GONNA SHOOT ME?!

THEN WHAT? IS EVERYONE ELSE HERE *NEXT?* YOU GONNA MAKE *THEM* DISAPPEAR TOO?!

I-I'M GOING TO--TO--

I WAS WORKING MY WAY THROUGH A LIST, PARKER. AND I WAS ALMOST DONE. BUT NOW...?

IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE ONE MORE NAME TO ADD.

THIS ISN'T OVER.

YOU'RE RIGHT, NORMAN. IT'S JUST BEGINNING. THE WORLD'S GOING TO SEE YOU IN A NEW LIGHT AFTER TODAY.

A LIGHT THAT'S TRUER THAN RED, WHITE, AND BLUE.

HAND! GET ON TOP OF THIS! I WANT THOSE CLIPS PULLED **WHEREVER** THEY SHOW UP ON THE NET!

I DON'T CARE WHAT IT TAKES! DO IT! WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO SPIN THIS! **NOW!**

WAY TO GO!

THAT WAS CAPRA-ESQUE!

WHAT'S CAPRA?

YOU CAN'T STOP THE SIGNAL!

FOR THE WIN!

I'M PUTTING THAT ON VIEWTUBE!

AND AMIDST THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE, OUR HERO EXITS STAGE RIGHT.

BREEP BREEP

OH. HEY, ROBBIE. WHAT'S UP?

HEY, PETER. SO I TAKE IT YOU PASSED OUR INFO ON TO SPIDER-MAN AND HE WAS ABLE TO GET THOSE FILES?

YES. WE'RE GETTING THEM NOW. WE'LL PUT 'EM UP ON *FRONT LINE'S* WEBSITE AFTER WE RUN THEM BY--

WHAT?!

AFTER THEY'VE ALREADY *GONE UP* ON THE *DB'S HOME PAGE!*

PARKER, YOU BACKSTABBING CREEP! YOU E-MAILED THESE TO *BETTY BRANT?! FIRST?!!*

NORAH! SORRY, I WAS IN A RUSH, I SENT 'EM TO *EVERYONE* ON MY E-MAIL LIST.

AND...WELL... ALPHABETICALLY SPEAKING, BETTY@BUGLEGIRL COMES BEFORE YOU@FRONTLINE.COM...

NORAH?!

DAN SLOTT WRITER

ADAM KUBERT PENCILS

MARK MORALES INKS

DEAN WHITE COLORS

VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA LETTERER

NORAH'S NEVER GONNA LET ME FORGET THIS.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? I CAN LIVE WITH THAT, 'CAUSE THIS IS A DAY I WANT TO REMEMBER.

THE DAY I PUT THE *REAL* CHINK IN OSBORN'S ARMOR.

THE DAY WHEN PETER PARKER STEPPED UP--

--AND BECAME THE *NUMBER ONE* REASON FOR THE *FALL* OF NORMAN'S EMPIRE.

The Last Name

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #2 — “GAUNTLET ORIGINS: ELECTRO”

GAUNTLET: ORIGINS

ELECTRO

DILLON IS A *RAT!* HE'D HAVE *LEFT* HARRIS UP THERE IF I DIDN'T OFFER TO PAY HIM! IF HE WASN'T OUR BEST POLE MAN I'D BOUNCE HIM IN A SECOND!

"BUT I DIDN'T CARE WHAT *ANY-BODY* THOUGHT OF ME--AND THEN, IT *HAPPENED!* A MILLION TO ONE CHANCE! I WAS WORK-ING ALONE ON A POLE, WHEN *LIGHTNING STRUCK!*"

ZZZZZZZZZ

"I SHOULD HAVE BEEN KILLED INSTANTLY, BUT BY A FANTASTIC FREAK OF FATE--DUE TO THE WAY I HAD BEEN GRASPING THE ELECTRIC WIRES--THE TWO BOLTS OF CURRENT CANCELLED EACH OTHER, AND..."

I-I'M STILL *ALIVE!*

IN FACT, I FEEL BETTER --- STRONGER THAN EVER!

Then:
GOETHALS BRIDGE
NEW JERSEY SIDE

POP

THUNK

KOF KOF VVRRRRRRRRRRMMMMMMM...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WHY ARE YOU SLOWING DOWN?

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS...

BATTERY'S DEAD!

SOMEBODY'S STOPPING.

I'LL HANDLE THIS.

STARK

HANDS WHERE I CAN *SEE* 'EM!

WHOA! OKAY...

JUST WANTED TO SEE IF YOU NEEDED ANY *HELP*...

SORRY, MISTER, WE CAN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES--*FOUR* TRANSISTOR SHIPMENTS BEEN JACKED ON THIS ROUTE JUST THIS MONTH!

I SAID *I'LL* HANDLE--

ACTUALLY...

Ngggk

KKKKRRRRRRZZZZZZZ

...IT'S BEEN *SIX.*

ONE OF STARK'S "NON-LETHAL" WEAPONS?

N--

NO--

DON'T--

KA-KLIK

TOO BAD.

BZZZAAAPPP

SKSSSSSH

-TARK

STILL... NOT *THERE* YET.

ELECTROSTATIC DISCHARGE LEAVES ME WEAK AND *LIGHT-HEADED.*

CAN'T BROWNOUT SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS A *CAR BATTERY* WITHOUT ATTACHING MYSELF TO IT BY A *WIRE.*

BUT I'M ON THE *VERGE.*

I CAN *FEEL* IT.

Arden Heights, Staten Island.

4-30KV/CM.

THAT'S MY PERSONAL *HOLY GRAIL.*

WHEN I'VE ABSORBED THAT MANY *KILOVOLTS,* MY BODY WILL EXCEED THE ELECTRIC FIELD STRENGTH OF THE *ATMOSPHERE.*

THAT'S *DIELECTRIC BREAKDOWN,* BABY. THE AIR AROUND ME *HUMMING* WITH *IONS* AND *FREE ELECTRONS.*

STARK

I'LL BE MY OWN *CONDUCTOR.*

HURL *LIGHTNING BOLTS* LIKE SOME LATTER-DAY *ZEUS.*

THANK YOU, *POPULAR ELECTRONICS,* AND YOUR ARTICLE ON STARK'S *SUPEREFFICIENT TRANSISTORS.*

MY MORON *EX-SUPERVISORS* WILL *NEVER* CATCH ME SIPHONING THIS MUCH POWER AWAY FROM THE GRID.

BETTER THAN DRUGS.

BETTER THAN *SEX.*

THIS IS WHAT *BEING BORN* MUST FEEL LIKE.

AND TO THINK THEY CALLED ME *MAD* AT ATLANTIC GAS & ELECTRIC.

OH. WAIT.

ACTUALLY, THEY CALLED ME THE *BEST DAMN LINEMAN THAT EVER LIVED.*

AND PRETTY SOON...

...THEY'LL CALL ME *GOD.*

WAI...

HEY! WHO'S THERE?

I CAN SEE YOU!

SHOW YOURSELF!

SHRRAAAACHK

YAAAGH!!

WHAT... THE HELL...?

I DETECTED A PROFOUND *DISTURBANCE* IN THE ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FIELD IN THIS VICINITY.

I PRESUME YOU ARE IT.

WHATEVER'S GOING ON HERE IS NO BUSINESS OF YOURS, MAN! YOU'RE TRESPASSING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY!

YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO BREAK IN HERE AND--

"RIGHT?"

THIS IS MY RIGHT.

AAH!!

WHAT... ARE YOU?

SHOVE IT UP YOUR--

GCCCHHHK!

OKAY, OKAY!

I'M MAX DILLON--I WAS A POLE MAN FOR AGGE!

FREAK ACCIDENT--GOT HIT BY LIGHTNING-- MADE ME SOME KIND OF *HUMAN CAPACITOR!*

...

THAT'S PREPOSTEROUS. SURELY YOU CAN'T BELIEVE THAT.

IT'S WHAT *HAPPENED!*

NO. I *BELIEVE* YOU WERE HIT BY LIGHTNING.

RISE, BROTHER...

BUT THE LIGHTNING COULD NOT GIVE *YOU* WHAT IT DENIES TO *EVERYONE ELSE.*

THE LIGHTNING MERELY *WAKENED* SOMETHING THAT WAS ALREADY *THERE,* SLUMBERING DEEP INSIDE YOU.

A *LATENCY.* NOT ENTIRELY MUTANT *OR* HUMAN.

WHAT...WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING?* THAT I'M A SCUM-SUCKING *MUTIE?* THAT'S WHAT *YOU* ARE!

LEMME DOWN FROM HERE AND LET'S HEAR YOU SAY THAT TO MY *FACE--*

NO. NOT A MUTANT. BUT *THEY* WILL NOT MAKE THAT DISTINCTION.

THEY WILL HATE AND FEAR *YOU* AS FIERCELY AS THEY HATE US--I, *MAGNETO,* AND MY *BROTHERHOOD.*

BUT *TOGETHER*...BOTH HALVES OF ELECTRO-MAGNETIC FORCE *COMBINED*...*WE* MAY FORGE A WORLD IN WHICH--

SKRRAAAASSSHH

WHAT? YOU THINK YOU CAN *CONTROL* ME? *HUH?* THAT IT?

LEMME TELL YOU SOMETHING, BULLET-HEAD:

MY WHOLE DAMN *LIFE* NOBODY EVER MISSED A CHANCE TO MAKE ME FEEL *SMALL.*

BUT THAT LIGHTNING STRIKE? THAT WAS *KARMA*, BABY. THAT WAS SOMEBODY *UPSTAIRS* SAYING I DON'T HAVE TO TAKE OTHER PEOPLE'S *GARBAGE* ANYMORE!

NOW *THEY* JUMP WHEN I TALK!

AND THAT'S *ALL* IT MEANS! YOU *HEAR* ME?

I HEAR YOU.

COME, CHILDREN.

THERE IS NOTHING FOR US HERE.

BUT... SHOULDN'T WE MAKE SURE YOUR *ENEMY* WON'T--

RECRUIT HIM? PLEASE.

XAVIER WILL TAKE NO NOTICE OF HIM.

NOR WILL ANYONE *ELSE*, I IMAGINE.

SO MUCH *POWER*...INSIDE SUCH A *LITTLE, LITTLE MAN.*

TCH. FATE, DESTINY... WHATEVER YOU WISH TO *CALL* HER...

...SHE IS A *COMEDIENNE.*

Woodside, Queens.

MAX.

HEY.

7

SORRY ABOUT THE DOOR.

BUT YOUR *TARDINESS* IS MAKING ME *ANTSY*.

JOHNNY PRO.

YOU'RE *LATE*. TWO WEEKS.

MY MONEY. WHERE *IS* IT?

THIS *CHICKEN SCRATCH* AIN'T IT.

I DON'T HAVE IT YET, BUT--

AND THAT "*BIG SCORE*" I WAS HELPING YOU INVEST IN, WITH THE MAGNETS AND THE *WIRE* DOOHICKEY...

TURNS OUT IT'S SOME *DUMP* IN STATEN ISLAND?

THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT *PART* OF IT. YOU'LL SEE--

AND WHAT DO I FIND HERE?

THIS *BALLET COSTUME*, LOOKS LIKE YOU *SEWED* IT *YOURSELF*...

YOU HOLDING SOME KINDA SICKO *COSTUME PARTIES* AT YOUR NEW HOUSE, WHICH *I* PAID FOR?

I SHOULDA LISTENED TO THAT LITTLE MAN IN MY HEAD. ONE THAT SAID YOU WERE A *BAD INVESTMENT*.

EVEN YOUR SPORTS BETS WERE STRICTLY *SMALL-TIME*. YOU ONLY GOT GUTS FOR *TALKING* BIG.

KNOW *WHAT*? I DON'T THINK I'M EVER GONNA SEE A *DIME* FROM YOU.

BUT I *AM* GONNA GET SATISFACTION IN *ANOTHER* WAY.

I'M NOT SMALL-TIME.

I'M NOT.

STARK

I'M READY.

THAT'S WHAT I AM.

The Beginning.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #612

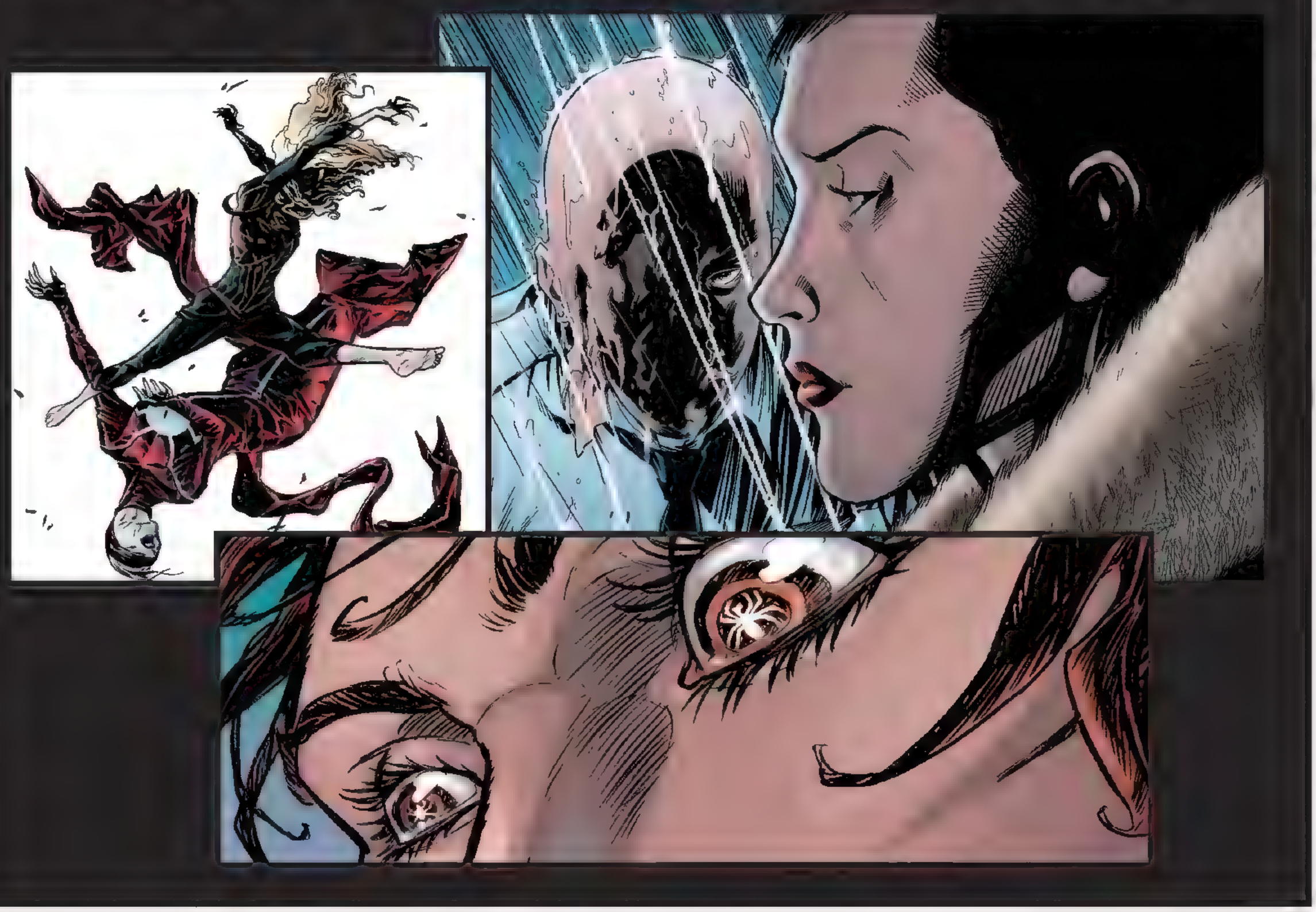
THE DB! FOR EVERY BRAND *NEWS* DAY!

THE DB

GHOSTLY GOVERNORS? RIVERFRONT SOURCES CLAIM "BIZARRE" NOISES EMANATING FROM GOVERNOR'S ISLAND. THE ISLAND OFF MANHATTAN'S COAST IS PRESENTLY OUT OF USE, BUT COULD THERE BE SECRETS BEHIND ITS SANDY SHORES AND ABANDONED CASTLES?

NOVEMBER 18, 2009 • WEDNESDAY

THE HUNTERS GATHER!



Last year, Ana Kraven, the daughter of Kraven the Hunter, tracked down Spider-Man to kill him. Spider-Man survived her attack, and Ana found herself at the mercy of her mother, Sasha, Kraven's former bride.

Since then, the Kravens have laid low, and have struck methodically – capturing Madame Web, a psychic and former ally to Spider-Man, as well as Mattie Franklin, the former Spider-Woman. Why they're hunting Spiders is unknown, but just as mysterious is who's helping them in their plans.

They have brought in Chameleon, Kraven's half-brother, and even hired the mercenary Deadpool to distract Spider-Man during their attack on Mattie. They have designs on recruiting a few more. The end result remains shadowed, but it cannot bode well for the Amazing Spider-Man…

ELECTRIC MAYHEM!

By Betty Brant

Con-Ed refused to comment on the streak of freak blackouts and electrical disturbances that have popped up across the city, but to call it a coincidence would be the path of least resistance. It started with the occasional brownouts (often interrupting this intrepid reporter's workday) but escalated to a full blown fire at the Empire State Building last month. The Mayor's Press Secretary, Glory Grant, refused to comment, but sources say…

(continued on page Q47)

What I have set in motion now begins.

They are coming.

Men of smoke and men of sand.

Predators.

Hunters.

An unrelenting storm of pain and sorrow the likes of which Spider-Man has never known.

I have thrown down my GAUNTLET.

My family's rise begins NOW.

IT STINGS WHEN I DRINK.

OW.

THAT'S WHAT LIFE'S COME DOWN TO.

NO MONEY. NO PROSPECTS. NO RESPECT.

AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEASON'S WORST *HEAT WAVE*, I CAN'T EVEN ENJOY A *COLD BEER*.

THE *BARFLY* SAT DOWN AND STARTED *YAMMERING*.

I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I DON'T *CARE* WHY.

IF I JUST *NOD* WHENEVER SHE TAKES A BREATH, MAYBE SHE WON'T GO *AWAY*.

SHE'S...FLIRTING? SHE'S REACHING FOR MY *HAND*.

GOD, HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE I'VE FELT...?

RELAX, MAX. JUST TAKE IT EASY. YOU CAN KEEP IT UNDER *CONTROL*. YOU CAN.

EASY...

OH!

NO--!

Hellboy

WHAT THE *HELL*--?

UNNNNNNHH

JEEZ, SHE'S ON *FIRE!* DO SOMETHIN'!

JIMMY, SHE AIN'T *BREATHIN'!* WHO KNOWS CPR?

WHAT *HAPPENED?*

ASK *HIM!*

AW, NO.

HEY, *BUDDY!* HE'S TALKIN' TO *YOU!*

I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH FOR A BAR FIGHT RIGHT NOW.

JIMMY, CALL 911 WHILE WE GET SOME *ANSWERS* FROM *HOODIE* THERE.

I CAN SNEAK OUT THE *BACK...*

WHAT'S HE--

...IF I CAN CREATE A *DISTRACTION.*

KZAAT

?

AW, *GREAT!*

IT AIN'T JUST *US*, JIMMY--

--IT'S THE WHOLE *BLOCK!*

IT'S LIKE A *LIGHTNIN' STORM* OUT THERE!

ONE WAY

HE DID THIS SOMEHOW! HE--

--HEY-- WHERE'D HE *GO?*

NOW THE BUH-BUH-*BURNING* STARTS.

ALWAYS DOES NOW WHENEVER I C-CUT *LOOSE*.

BACKLASH. AW, *GOD*...GIMME A B-*BREAK*...

...

WHO'M I KIDDING? GOD STOPPED LISTENING TO ME A LONG TIME *AGO*.

HE TURNED HIS BACK ON *MAX DILLON*.

HE TURNED HIS BACK ON **ELECTRO**.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

PART ONE

MARK WAID — WRITER
PAUL AZACETA — ART
DAVE STEWART — COLOR ART
VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA — LETTERING
TOM BRENNAN — CHARGED UP
STEPHEN WACKER — FRIED OUT
TOM BREVOORT — EXEC. EDITOR
JOE QUESADA — EDITOR IN CHIEF
DAN BUCKLEY — PUBLISHER
ALAN FINE — EXEC. PRODUCER

GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

Nearby...

ANOTHER BLACKOUT?

I MEAN, I SHOULDN'T BE *SURPRISED*...IN THIS HEAT, I'D BE USING AIR CONDITIONING JUST TO COOL OFF MY *AIR CONDITIONER*, SO I'M SURE THE POWER GRIDS ARE *MAXED OUT*...

...BUT EVEN *CON ED* SAYS THESE WACKY VOLTAGE UPS-AND-DOWNS ARE HAPPENING PRETTY *UNPREDICTABLY*...

...LIKE THE ONE THAT CAUSED THAT *ELECTRICAL FIRE* AT THE *EMPIRE STATE BUILDING* A COUPLE WEEKS AGO!

ISSUE #601
--SPARKMASTER STEVE.

HEY, LI'L FELLA! I KNOW IT'S PROBABLY AN *OVEN* IN THERE, BUT BE CAREFUL HOW FAR YOU LEAN *OUT*--

WHOA!

IT'S OKAY! I'VE GOTCHA!

THAT'LL TEACH YOU! BAD BOY! BAAAAAD BOY!

AWW, WHO'M I KIDDING? YOU'RE *ADORABLE!* C'MERE!

WHADDAYA THINK YER DOIN'?

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! GIMME MY PUP BACK, YA--YA DOGNAPPER!

"DOGCATCHER," TECHNICA--

SHADDAP!

COME TO *PAPA*, CUDDLEBUN! WHO WANTS A *TREAT*? HUH? *HUH*?

IF YOU'RE *OFFERING*, I COULD USE A GLASS OF *WA*--

SHADDAP!

DON'T LET THE NASTY SPIDER-MAN *SCARE* YOU, CUDDLEBUN! DADDY'S *RIGHT HERE!*

FINE. *FINE*. AGAINST MY *BETTER JUDGMENT*, I *RETURN* HIM. *BEHOLD*.

JUST PROMISE ME YOU'LL LOOK INTO GETTING SOME SORT OF *CAGE* FOR THAT THING.

I'M NOT PUTTIN' MY CUDDLEBUN IN NO *CAGE!*

I WAS TALKING TO THE *DOG*.

"WHY DO YOU DO IT, WEB-SLINGER? WHY DO YOU RISK LIFE AND LIMB AS SPIDER-MAN *EVERY NIGHT*, RAIN OR SHINE?"

"BECAUSE, OPRAH, THERE'S SIMPLY NO MORE EXPEDIENT WAY TO GET BLAMED BY *EVERYONE* FOR *EVERYTHING*."

I OUGHTA TRY FINDING A *PATTERN* TO THESE BLACKOUTS BEFORE I GET ACCUSED OF *THEM*, TOO...!

MAYBE BETTY'S HEARD SOMETHING.

ALSO, MAYBE SHE CAN EXPLAIN WHY THERE'S A CROWD OF PICKETERS OUTSIDE HER NEWSPAPER!

THE DB

WHO DID THE PUBLISHER HONK OFF NOW? TALK ABOUT HAVING A DESERVED REPUTATION FOR RILING UP NEW YORKERS...

EXIT

HAPS, BETTS! WHAT'S WITH THE HOT RABBLE ACTION IN THE STREET?

WANTED

dead or alive
www.furyfiles.com

DON'T YOU WORK AT THE MAYOR'S OFFICE NOW? DO YOU HEAR NOTHING?

DEXTER BENNETT, OUR BELOVED PUBLISHER AND OWNER, IS ABOUT TO BECOME THE FIRST TYCOON TO ENGINEER A GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER BAILOUT IN THE FACE OF THIS CRAPTACULAR ECONOMY...

...WHICH IS NOT GOING OVER WELL WITH OUR PUBLIC...NOT WITH NYC UNEMPLOYMENT AT AN IN-OUR-LIFETIME HIGH AND CIVIL WORKERS JEALOUS OF THE HANDOUT!

HANG ON A SECOND, PETE...

YES! YES, I'M STILL HERE!

WOW! IS THAT AN OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION? IT IS? THANK YOU!

MIXED NEWS! I STILL HAVE A JOB!

PETE, IT'S DONE! THE BAILOUT CAME THROUGH! SOMEHOW, SOME WAY, BENNETT PULLED IT OFF!

AND THE CROWD GOES WILD...

"I WAS A LINEMAN FOR THE COUNTY. GOT HIT BY *LIGHTNING* WHEN I WAS CLIMBING THE *HIGH-VOLTS*. I SHOULDA *DIED*.

"I *WAS* DEAD TO THE ELECTRIC COMPANY. THEY CLAIMED I WAS OFF THE *CLOCK*. DENIED MY *BENEFITS*. *AND* FIRED ME.

"THEY THOUGHT THE ACCIDENT *BROKE* ME... BUT IT CHARGED ME *UP*. I STARTED THROWING *THUNDERBOLTS* AROUND.

"SO I PUT ON A *MASK* AND STARTED A LITTLE...*PERSONAL RESTITUTION* PROGRAM. FIGURED I WAS *OWED*, RIGHT?

"GUYS LIKE *SPIDER-MAN* AND *DAREDEVIL* GOT IN THE WAY MOST OF THE TIME...BUT I STILL MANAGED TO MAKE A DECENT *LIVING*.

"LATELY, THOUGH... LATELY, THE POWER'S BEEN ACTING UP. WON'T STAY *STEADY* ENOUGH FOR ME TO STAND AND FIGHT.

"SOMETIMES I'M *BURSTING*, SOMETIMES I'M A *DEAD BATTERY*."

MY SISTER WAS A DIABETIC WHO ALWAYS HAD A TOUGH TIME MANAGING HER *INSULIN*. THAT'S HOW I FEEL ABOUT STAYING *RECHARGED*, Y'KNOW?

I UNDERSTAND, MR. DILLON, BUT I HAVEN'T TIME TO WASTE BEING YOUR *THERAPIST*. CHARGE THE *EQUIPMENT*.

GENE SEQUENCERS ARE NOW ONLINE AND FUNCTIONAL, THINKER.

THANK YOU, ANNIE. MONITOR THEIR PROGRESS.

I'M FORESEEING A 3.7 PERCENT RISK OF SPONTANEOUS METABOLIC FUSION. KEEP ME APPRISED.

WHAT... =HNNNH= ...WHAT ABOUT *ME?*

IT'S MY *BIOCHEMISTRY*, THINKER. IT'S GOING SOUR WITH AGE.

PLEASE... YOU GOTTA *HELP* ME. YOU SAID YOU CAN *CURE* ME. I'M HELPING *YOU...!*

THIS? THIS IS FOR ROOM AND *BOARD*, MAX. I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE, THE OPERATION *YOU* WANT WOULD COST UPWARDS OF A *MILLION*.

DO YOU *HAVE* A MILLION PUT AWAY, MR. DILLON?

YOU KNOW I DON'T!

I DON'T HAVE A *DIME!*

MY *LIFE SAVINGS* ARE GONE! SWALLOWED BY THOSE FAT *PIGS* ON *WALL STREET!*

I WAS SMART ENOUGH TO SHELTER MY TAKE FROM THE *FEDS* ALL THESE *YEARS*, AND SO *WHAT?* NOW SOME *RICH BANKER* IS SITTING ON IT!

OH--!

I--I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T MEAN TO GO *OFF* LIKE THAT! DON'T BE SCARED! I WOULDN'T HURT YOU! I LIKE YOU!

PLEASE, *MR. DILLON...!*

IS IT THE *BEARD?* I CAN *SHAVE* FOR YOU! SEE?

KZZKT

OH, GOD, THAT *SMELL...!*

BOSS, GET HIM *AWAY* FROM ME!

AWRIGHT! AWRIGHT. I WAS JUST--

NEVER MIND.

WHAT WAS I THINKING?

LIKE SHE DOESN'T THINK OF ME AS A *FREAK.*

IT'S NOT FAIR.

NO, WORSE. IT'S *CRIMINAL.*

HOW I GET CALLED A *CROOK* WHEN CORPORATE SLEAZEBALLS ARE *OPENLY ROBBING* THIS COUNTRY AT *EVERYONE'S* EXPENSE.

MOMMY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT MAN?

HUSH.

WHY'ZE WEARIN' A *RUBBER COAT* WHEN IT'S SO HOT?

I SAID, *HUSH.*

STEALING OUR *FUTURE.*

THEY'RE THE ONES WHO OUGHTA BE PAYING...

The NY Times

IS THE DB SPECIAL? GOV. THINKS SO

--NOT *ME!*

AAAAAAH!

AND I KNOW JUST HOW TO MAKE THAT *HAPPEN.*

Monday.
CITY HALL

HOW MANY NEWS STATIONS ARE COVERING THIS?

PRETTY MUCH ALL OF THEM, MAYOR JAMESON, SIR-- *LOCAL* AND *NATIONAL*.

"*BENNETT BAILOUT OUTRAGE*" SEEMS TO BE THE MOST COMMON TERM FOR IT.

AND *WELL-EARNED*--NOT A WORD USUALLY APPLIED TO *DEXTER BENNETT!* YOU KNOW, THAT USED TO BE MY NEWSPAPER!

I DO, SIR.

THE *DAILY BUGLE!* NEW YORK'S PAPER OF *RECORD!* BENNETT PRACTICALLY *STOLE* IT OUT FROM UNDER ME, TURNED IT INTO THAT *TABLOID RAG* HE CALLS THE "*DB!*"...

...AND RAN IT INTO THE *GROUND* BECAUSE HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW A *BUDGET* WORKS! THIS IS A *MEDIA MOMENT!*

RECORD THIS!

WHICH STATION, SIR?

ALL OF 'EM! GET *EVERY FRAME* OF *EVERY FEED*, BECAUSE *THIS* IS HOW I PLAN TO SPEND MY *RETIREMENT* SOMEDAY--

--WATCHING BENNETT'S HUMILIATION *OVER* AND *OVER* AND *OVER* AND--

BILL, WE'VE GOT SOME *BREAKING NEWS* ON *ANOTHER* STORY BREWING--THIS ONE'S ALSO IN THE CITY'S FINANCIAL DISTRICT!

IS THAT...?

IT IS! IT'S *ELECTRO!* WHAT'S *HE* DOING IN TOWN?

TELL COMMISSIONER VALENTIN TO PUT OUT AN *ALL-POINTS BULLETIN* ON THAT PSYCHOPATH--

--AND TURN UP THE *VOLUME!*

CNN

ROOFTOP RANT

--TRACKING A *NEW VIRAL VIDEO* THAT'S JUST BEEN RELEASED ON THE WEB AND HAS *ALREADY* CLOCKED OVER *ONE HUNDRED THOUSANDS HITS!*

SEE FOR *YOURSELF* WHAT THIS SELF-STYLED PUBLIC *AVENGER* HAS TO SAY!

PEOPLE OF NEW YORK, YOU'RE BEING ROBBED--AND NOT BY ME!

SURE, I'VE GONE UP AGAINST SPIDER-MAN--A VIGILANTE WANTED BY THE POLICE, WHO CONSIDER HIM A THREAT TO YOUR SAFETY--

--BUT I HAVE NEVER ONCE USED MY POWERS AGAINST AVERAGE, HARDWORKING AMERICANS LIKE YOU AND ME!

I HAVE NEVER ONCE PUT MY HANDS IN YOUR POCKETS--BUT YOU KNOW WHO HAS?

A MAN NAMED DEXTER BENNETT!

HE AND HIS FAILING NEWSPAPER ARE RIGHT NOW STEALING YOUR TAX MONEY TO PAY FOR HIS LOSSES!

LOOK AROUND YOU! IT'S HAPPENING ALL OVER! WHILE YOU AND I ARE REELING FROM THIS DISASTROUS ECONOMY--

--WHILE WE ARE STRUGGLING TO FEED OUR KIDS AND BUY GROCERIES, WHILE YOU AND I ARE GETTING HAMMERED WITH LAYOFFS AND SALARY CUTS--

--THE GOVERNMENT IS SHOVELLING HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS IN SO-CALLED "BAILOUT MONEY"--OUR MONEY--AT MILLIONAIRES LIKE BENNETT!

IS IT FAIR THAT YOU'RE PAYING FOR HIS MANSION AND HIS BUTLER WHILE YOU'RE WORKING TWO JOBS?

IS IT FAIR THAT YOU'RE BAILING OUT A RICH MAN'S FAILING BUSINESS WHEN YOU CAN'T EVEN PAY YOUR MORTGAGE?

JOIN WITH ME! SEND A MESSAGE TO DEXTER BENNETT! LET HIM KNOW WE ARE FREE MEN WHO DO NOT WORK FOR HIM!

TELL HIM THAT WE ARE NEW YORKERS! WE'RE AMERICANS! WE HAVE NEVER LET THE DEXTER BENNETTS OF THE WORLD RULE US LIKE KINGS!

WHEN OUR BACKS ARE TO THE WALL, WE DON'T FOLD! WE FIGHT BACK!

WE CHARGE!

Tuesday.

HERE YA GO, CHARLIE! HOT OFF THE *PRESS!*

WHAT? *NO!* I CALLED ABOUT THIS! *NO MORE DB!*

THE DB

TAKE BACK YOUR *TRASH RAG!*

I AIN'T *SELLIN'* IT NO MORE AND NEITHER IS *ANYBODY ELSE* ON THIS STREET!

I HOPE *ELECTRO* PUTS YOU LEECHES OUTTA *BUSINESS!*

Wednesday.

THE DB

YOU BROKE IT? YOU BOUGHT IT!

YOU BROKE IT? YOU BOUGHT IT!

YOU BROKE IT? YOU BOUGHT IT!

GIVE UP *YOUR* SALARY, BENNETT--NOT *MINE!*

SHARE THE WEALTH

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO "*FREE PRESS*"?

PRINT *THAT* IN YOUR PAPER, YOU *THIEF!*

BAIL FAIL

THE DB HATES BLACK PEOPLE

GREED GREED GREED

THE DB NYP

STOP CORPORATE GREED!

STOP CORPORATE GREED! STOP CORPORATE GREED!

Thursday.

PETER PARKER'S SHARED APARTMENT

...NNNNHHH...

WHAT *TIME* IS IT?

SCRATCH THAT. WHO *CARES?*

I'VE BEEN OUT OF TOWN WITH THE *AVENGERS* FOR THREE DAYS.

I'M *EXHAUSTED.* I'M *ENTITLED* TO *VEG* OUT.

...

WHERE'S THE...

LOOKING FOR *THIS?*

YOU WANNA WATCH *MY TV?* COST YOU *TEN BUCKS.*

YOU KNOW WHO HAD A MORE CHARMING ROOMMATE THAN YOU? EVA BRAUN.

YAWN

YOU COULD BAKE A *POTATO* IN THIS PLACE, MICHELE. I'M GONNA TAKE A COLD SHOWER.

FIVE BUCKS.

OR MAYBE JUST SIT IN FRONT OF THE *FAN.*

SEVEN.

SATAN! YOU'RE *SATAN!* WHAT, ARE YOU SAVING UP FOR A NEW *PITCHFORK?*

AT LEAST I CAN HOLD MY *LIQUOR.*

...AAAAAND WE'RE BACK TO *THAT!*

FOR THE *MILLIONTH TIME*, I WAS STARING DOWN THE FIGURATIVE BARREL OF MY *EX-GIRLFRIEND* THAT NIGHT!

I HAVE *NEVER* BEEN DRUNK *BEFORE*, AND I WILL NEVER, *EVER* BE DRUNK *AGAIN!*

NOR WERE YOU DRUNK *THEN*.

AT AUNT MAY'S WEDDING RECEPTION IN ISSUE #601
--BARTENDER STEVE

WHAT ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT? I WAS *THERE!* I HAD, LIKE, A *DOZEN--*

ELEVEN.

--TWELVE--

ELEVEN.

--GLASSES OF--

APPLE-GINGER ALE.

"YOU WERE SO NERVOUS AND OUT OF IT AFTER A *HALF-GLASS* OF *BUBBLY*, YOU NEVER EVEN *NOTICED* I WAS FILLING YOUR FLUTE WITH *SODA*."

CHUMP.

"AT FIRST, I WAS DOING IT TO BE *NICE* AND KEEP YOU SOBER IN FRONT OF *WHAT'S-HER-NAME...*

"...BUT IT WAS SO ENTERTAINING TO WATCH YOU *THINK* YOU WERE GETTING MORE *PLOWED*, I JUST KEPT *POURING*."

MARY JANE!
--USHER STEVE.

HOW ENTERTAINING?

I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYONE TRY THE *MACARENA* SINCE *JUNIOR HIGH.*

BUT I WAS *HUNG OVER* THE NEXT DAY...

SAYS THE GUY WHO'S NEVER BEEN *DRUNK*. IT WAS *NERVES*. MAYBE YOU CAUGHT A *COLD*.

I APPRECIATE YOUR TELLING ME.

THAT'LL BE *TWENTY* BUCKS.

PUT IT ON MY T--

HANG ON. IS THAT *ELECTRO?* HE HAS A *VIDEO?*

A *SERIES*. "*POWER TO THE PEOPLE.*" HE'S GOT THE WHOLE CITY EATING OUT OF HIS HANDS!

HE'S BEEN CALLING FOR *PROTEST MARCHES*, AND THEY'RE GETTING *BIGGER* AND *BIGGER*. IN FACT, ONE'S GOING ON *RIGHT NOW--*

"--AT THE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE!"

THIS IS MY PUNISHMENT FOR LEAVING TOWN DURING A COMBINATION HEAT WAVE/FINANCIAL MELTDOWN/CIVIL FED-UP-ITUDE!

THE COPS ARE HERE--IT'S NOT LIKE ELECTRO'S CRIMINAL RECORD IS A SECRET--

--BUT A MOB THAT ANGRY DOESN'T MUCH CARE!

WILL YOU

IN ELECTRO WE

BINGO. THERE'S THEIR GREEN-AND-YELLOW *FOLK HERO!*

MAYBE HE'S NOT DOING ANYTHING CRIMINAL RIGHT THIS *SECOND*...BUT IF I KNOW *ELECTRO*, IT'S BETTER TO BE *PRE-EMPTIVE!*

PLUS, JUDGING BY THE WAY MY *SPIDER-SENSE* JUST SPIKED, HE SEES *ME, TOO.*

'SOKAY. THAT'LL MAKE IT A *FAIR* FIGHT, IF A *SHORT* ONE--

--BECAUSE IF I'VE LEARNED *ANYTHING* ABOUT MAX DILLON OVER THE YEARS--

HEY, *SPARKY! NAP TIME!*

--IT'S THAT *SPIDER-STRENGTH* PLUS *RUBBER GLOVES* MAKES *FAST WORK!*

FZZZT

KRAK! KA-

NOT THIS TIME, SPIDER-MAN!

HOLY--! HE BURNED RIGHT *THROUGH* THE *GLOVE...?*

LOOK! UP THERE!

NYSE

HE'LL SAVE US!
DARN RIGHT I--
GO, ELECTRO!
NERTZ.
UNNHH...
POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
POWER TO THE PEOPLE! POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
LOOKING A LITTLE *PEAKED* THERE, SPARKY! I WILL SAY *THIS*, THOUGH--
--I WISH I HAD YOUR *PRESS AGENT!*
=HNNGH!=
I HADDA LET MINE *GO* AFTER HE COULDN'T BOOK ME ON THE *COLBERT REPORT!*
AND AFTER ALL I *DID* FOR THAT GUY!
LET HIM *ALONE*, YA *BUM!*

HEY, SPIDER-HAM! WHOSE PAYROLL ARE YOU ON?

HIS PICTURE'S IN THE DB PRACTICALLY EVERY DAY! HE PROBABLY WORKS FOR BENNETT!

SURE HE DOES! HE'S THE ENEMY! GO MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS, YOU SOCIALIST TRAITOR!

LOOK, I FEEL FOR YOU PEOPLE! THEY'RE MY TAX DOLLARS, TOO! BUT DOES ANYONE HERE GET THAT ELECTRO IS A WANTED FELON?

NO?

WELL, THE FINE FOLKS AT THE POLICE STATION WILL BE HAPPY TO EXPLAIN IT TO YOU!

'MEMBER HOW YOU CAN'T ARC ALONG MY WEBBING, BIG MOUTH? SUCKS FOR YOU!

EYAAAAAH!

NOT ANY MORE.

WAKE UP, NEW YORK!

YOU WANT TO SHOW WALL STREET WHO REALLY HAS THE POWER?

WHAT HAPPENS TO BENNETT'S HIRED GUNS WHEN THEY MUSCLE IN TO SHUT YOU DOWN?

IN ELECTRO WE TRUST!

SEND A MESSAGE, NEW YORK!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

WHAT ABOUT US?

DOWN WITH DEXTER BENNETT

TO BE CONTINUED!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #613

New York City.
WALL STREET

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

LISTEN! LISTEN! I'M NOT THE ENEMY!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

PART TWO

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DAN BUCKLEY — PUBLISHER
ALAN FINE — EXEC. PRODUCER

GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

YOU PEOPLE ARE BEING *PLAYED* BY *ELECTRO!*

CALM *DOWN*, OKAY? I DON'T WANT TO *HURT* ANYB--

YOU *THREATENING* US?

HEAR THAT? SPIDER-MAN *THREATENED* US!

HEY, SPIDER-MAN! WHY ARE YOU BULLYING ELECTRO? IT'S GUYS LIKE HIM WHO ARE STANDING UP TO WALL STREET!

HOW MUCH OF THAT BAILOUT MONEY IS DEXTER BENNETT PAYING YOU?

I BET THAT'S *IT!* I BET HE'S IN BENNETT'S *POCKET!* SHOW HIM WHO'S *BOSS!*

WHAT'S WRONG?

I HAD MY HANDS RIGHT *ON* HIM! WHERE'D HE *GO?*

WHO'S GOT HIM?

HE'S *GONE!* AND SO'S *ELECTRO!*

BUT...BUT IF SPIDER-MAN HAD SWUNG *OUT*, ONE OF US WOULD HAVE *SEEN* HIM, RIGHT...?

HOW THE HELL DID HE *GET AWAY?*

WHEW.

GOOD THING I SPOTTED THAT *MANHOLE COVER* CLOSE BY, OR I'D HAVE BEEN TORN TO *PIECES!*

MAN, I HAVE TO HAND IT TO *ELECTRO!* HE'S GOT CROWDS LIKE THAT EATING OUT OF HIS *HAND* THANKS TO HIS *ANTI-BAILOUT* VIRAL VIDEOS!

INSERT IRONIC CRACK HERE ABOUT "THE POWER OF THE *WEB!*"

YOU WON *THIS* ROUND AGAINST *SPIDER-MAN* BY *VAMOOSING,* SPARKY...

...BUT I STASHED MY CLOTHES--AND MY *CAMERA*--ONLY A COUPLE BLOCKS *AWAY...*

...SO MAYBE THERE'S *SOME* WAY TO PULL A MINOR WIN OUT OF THIS AS *PETER PARKER...!*

THINKER! THINKER, CAN YOU HEAR ME? THINK--

GHAH! CUT OUT AGAIN--!

BEEP BIP BAP

Big Brain
347-555-7568

THINKER, IF YOU'RE GETTING THIS, HELP ME!

IT'S MY POWERS! THEY'RE KILLING ME!

THEY'RE UP AND THEY'RE DOWN AND YOU SAID YOU CAN FIX 'EM AND YOU GOTTA HELP ME!

YOU'RE NOT *THINKING*, ELECTRO. RAISING A *MOB* WHEN YOU SHOULD BE RAISING *MONEY* FOR AN EXPENSIVE *PROCEDURE*...

FRANKLY, IT'S GOTTEN DIFFICULT, EVEN FOR *ME*, TO ENVISION A SCENARIO IN WHICH I ADMINISTER SUCH A COSTLY TREATMENT.

DON'T TALK TO ME LIKE I'M AN IDIOT! I HAVE A PLAN--

KZAK

OH!

SIGNAL'S *GONE*.

WHAT ARE THE ODDS THAT FREAK WAS SO UPSET HE *FRIED* HIS *PHONE*?

ONE HUNDRED PERCENT, ANNIE.

THAT WAS AWESOME! I BET THAT MAKES HEADLINES TOMORROW!

TOMORROW'S THE WEEKEND! WE CAN GET TEN TIMES AS MANY PEOPLE TO PROTEST!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

'SCUSE ME

'SCUSE

HEY, ANYBODY SEE WHICH WAY ELECTRO WENT?

WHAT'RE YOU, SPIDER-MAN?

TRY NOT TO SPIT THE NAME, OKAY?

HE'S NOT THE BAD GUY HERE! OR DIDN'T YOU NOTICE THAT HE BENT OVER BACKWARDS TRYING NOT TO DO ANY DAMAGE WHILE YOU WERE RIPPING INTO HIM?

SPIDER-MAN PROBABLY GETS A FAT AVENGERS SALARY AND DOESN'T EVEN PAY TAXES LIKE WE DO!

HE SURE AS HELL GETS A KICKBACK ON ALL THOSE NEWS PICTURES HE'S IN! HOW IS HE A VICTIM IN ALL THIS?

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON, JACKASS?

THE TRUTH'S.

HOLD THAT SNARL, BUDDY.

KLIK

LOOK OUT, KATE! A-ROD SEEN WITH MILLIE!

THE DB

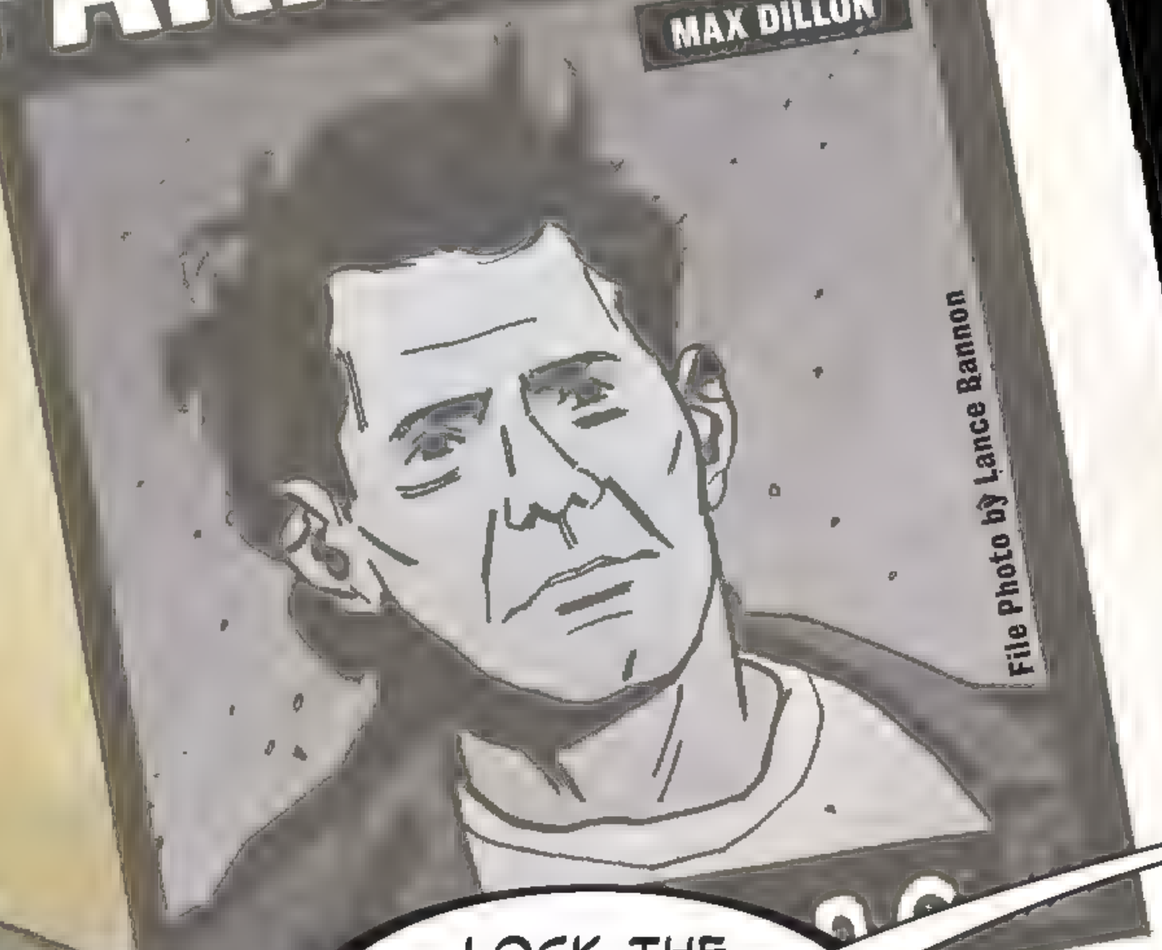
MAYOR TO BENNETT: "DROP DEAD!"

ELECTRO SPARKS MOB

DEXTER BENNETT

Photo By Peter Parker

MAX DILLON



File Photo by Lance Bannon

LOCK THE DOORS, MOONEY, I'M TAKING A BATH!

Crook's Target: City Defender Dexter Bennett

Euismod nulla nulla elit volutpat ipsum, in duis ex minim ut tation wisi dignissim zzril consequat praesent ... nulla ut. Quis ea hendrerit odio nostrud ... accumsan in nonummy. ... facilisi

...m, in duis ex minim ut ...il consequat praesent ...uis ea hendrerit odio nostrud ...molestie accumsan in nonummy. ...autem delenit iusto molestie facilisi magna, illum hendrerit magna duis Iusto feugait eu wisi ullamcorper suscipit zzril veniam feugait accumsan lobortis vulputate, odio facilisis vulputate vel dolore suscipit, sed, ut eum et. Facilisis, feugiat suscipit dolore accumsan vero erat, nibh vero consectetuer velit iriure duis, exerci ea duis, ea, blandit veniam Quis dolore tincidunt delent. eum tincidunt ea eros duis consequat autem velit nostrud, suscipit wisi commodo enim exerci Feugiat quis, dolore dignissim velit ut nostrud amet zzril dolor enim, iriure te blandit illum at nulla nulla elit volutpat ... Euismod nulla nulla elit volutpat ipsum, in duis ex ... tation wisi dignissim zzril consequat ... nulla ut Quis ea hendrerit odio ... accumsan in ... dolore

EVENING, BENNETT.

GUARDS!

OH, THEY'RE NOT COMING. PITY. THEY WERE GOOD MEN. SOLID.

GROUNDED.

WHAT... WHAT DO YOU *WANT?*

I'M HERE TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF *COMFORT*, BENNETT.

FOR EXAMPLE... HOW'S THE *WATER?*

SHALL I CHECK THE *TEMPERATURE?*

NO!

GREEDY MEN LIKE YOU HAVE TAKEN ALL MY *CURRENCY*, BENNETT.

ALL I HAVE LEFT TO GIVE...IS *CURRENT.*

WHY *ME?* DEAR GOD, I'M *SMALL POTATOES* COMPARED TO THE *BANKERS* AND THE *BARONS!* WHY HAVE YOU SINGLED *ME* OUT?

TO *SCARE* YOU INTO A *DEAL.*

I HAVE FOUND THAT *FRIGHTENED* MEN ARE NOT TERRIBLY *STINGY.*

BLACKMAIL. THIS IS ABOUT *MONEY.*

IT'S *ALWAYS* ABOUT MONEY.

I HAVE THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF *ENRAGED TAXPAYERS* HANGING ON MY *EVERY WORD.* THEY'LL DESTROY ANY TARGET I POINT AT.

AND AFTER WHAT VERMIN LIKE YOU HAVE *PUT* ME THROUGH, I AM *ACHING* TO POINT THEM AT *YOU.*

IF YOU WANT ME TO CALL THEM *OFF...* IT'LL *COST* YOU.

HOW MUCH...?

...

Peter Parker's (Shared) Apartment.

24 SLEEPLESS HOURS LATER

STAY *AWAKE*. THIS THING *WORKS*, I WILL BE HAILED AS THE WORLD'S FOREMOST TRUFFLE-SNIFFING *PIG*.

ONLY INSTEAD OF *TRUFFLES*, I WILL SNIFF HUGE *POWER SURGES* THAT WILL LEAD TO *ELECTRO*.

I WILL ALSO BE NAMED *GOD-KING* OF THE HORRIBLE SLEEP-DEPRIVED *METAPHOR*.

I BUILT *SPIDER-TRACERS* WHEN I WAS IN *HIGH SCHOOL*. NOT A *TOTAL* STRETCH THAT I COULD MARRY THAT TECH TO *THIS*.

VOILA. SO SLEEK, SO *BEAUTIFUL*...AS IF A PIG-NOSE MATED WITH AN IPOD.

BOY, I NEED A NAP.

BUT FIRST... TO *TEST* IT.

ALL I NEED...

...IS GREAT *POWER*.

AND WE ALL KNOW...

...WHAT COMES WITH *THAT*.

HA! SCIENCE!

POP!

WAIT. SPIDER-SENSE *STILL* TINGLING. DANGER...?

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING*, YOU *MANIAC*?

WARSPHERE SIMULATION, TRIAL NUMBER 17:

CALCULATING THE POSSIBILITY OF FAILURE AT A NEARLY ACCEPTABLE .901 PERCENT, UP FROM... UP FROM...

...ANNIE, WHAT WAS THE MARGIN IN THE PREVIOUS SIM?

ANNIE?

ANNIE! DID YOU *SHOW* UP TODAY, OR AM I *HALLUCINATING?*

SORRY. *SORRY!* IT'S JUST...

LOOK, I'M PREOCCUPIED WITH *ELECTRO*, OKAY? THE WAY HE *STARES* AT ME, IT'S...WELL, IT'S *CREEPY*, THAT'S ALL.

I JUST DON'T WANT HIM *AROUND*. AND I DON'T THINK I CAN *WORK* HERE IF IT MEANS I HAVE TO PUT UP WITH *HIM*.

FACTORING IN ALL THE DATA, THERE IS A *CHANCE* THAT ELECTRO'S CHEMICAL IMBALANCE IS MAKING HIM SO IRRATIONAL THAT HE MAY *NEVER* COME UP WITH THE MONEY FOR THE TREATMENT HE NEEDS.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR *YOU*, MY DEAR, I PUT THOSE ODDS...

...AT *NEAR-ZERO.*

WHUMP

I COULD *HEAR* YOU.

HEAR YOU *TALKING*. YOU, *ANNIE*...YOU WANT YOUR BOSS TO CUT ME LOOSE. TO LET ME *DIE*.

DON'T SELL ME *SHORT*, ANNIE.

ARE YOU GOING TO LISTEN TO *HER*, THINKER? *ARE* YOU GONNA TURN ME AWAY?

CAN'T YOU SEE HOW I'M *SUFFERING*? DOES THAT *MEAN* ANYTHING? OR ARE PEOPLE JUST *NUMBERS* TO YOU?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

THAT I'M SO *SICK* I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I'M *SAYING* HALF THE TIME. OF *COURSE* WE'RE NUMBERS.

BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARE ABOUT ME. JUST THINK OF THE *MONEY*.

THINK OF THE *MONEY*.

WHAT CAN I *SAY*?

THERE *IS* RATHER A *LOT* OF IT.

ANNIE, DEAR...PREP THE GENE *SPLICER*.

SIGH

WAY TO BLOW A *CIRCUIT*, PETE. NOW I HAVE TO APOLOGIZE TO *MICHELE* OF ALL PEOPLE. LIKE SHE'LL *LISTEN.*

TIME FOR ANOTHER *PEACE OFFERING.* MAYBE A NEW CLOTH FOR HER *WATERBOARD.*

OR I COULD JUST QUIT *KICKING* MYSELF FOR ONCE. I *WAS* SLEEPLESS, AND SLEEPLESS PEOPLE ARE UNDERSTANDABLY *DOPEY.*

BKNY

BUT--NO MATTER HOW *STUPID* IT MAKES ME--I DON'T EVEN WANT TO *REST* UNTIL *ELECTRO'S* DEALT WITH.

BUGS ME *SO MUCH.* ALL THE BANGS AND BRUISES I'VE TAKEN TO PROTECT THIS CITY FROM HIM OVER THE YEARS--

--ALL *FORGOTTEN* BY PEOPLE JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE...

...OKAY, THEY'RE *SCARED.* AND I CAN'T BEGRUDGE THEM *THAT*, NOT IN THIS CLIMATE.

BUT SAY WHAT YOU WILL ABOUT *DEXTER BENNETT*, HE DOESN'T DESERVE TO BE *LYNCHED.*

I JUST WANT THIS TO BE *OVER* WITH. IF ONLY THIS *DEVICE* WOULD COOPERATE.

CAN I GET A BEEP? JUST A LITTLE ONE?

JAY, DARLING, I'M NOT SURE ABOUT A...A...

...WHAT DO THEY CALL IT THESE DAYS? A *POP-IN?* WE SHOULD HAVE *CALLED*...

I DID. BUT YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT PETER HARDLY *EVER* ANSWERS HIS PHONE. MAYBE WE'LL CATCH HIM AT *HOME*.

HE'LL BE *DELIGHTED* TO *SEE* YOU, MAY. MORE IMPORTANTLY, *YOU* MISS *HIM*.

NEWLYWEDS "JAY" AND MAY JAMESON HAVE BEEN ON AN AROUND-THE-WORLD HONEYMOON SINCE ISSUE #600 --LOVE-BOAT STEVE.

OUR LAYOVER IS SHORT, MAY. LET IT PUT A *SMILE* ON THAT BEAUTIFUL FACE OF YOURS.

SEE? I HEAR HIM COMING TO THE DOOR *NOW!* BE *READY*...

4B

WHAT?

4B

OH. PETER'S *AUNT!*

PETER'S AUNT WHO *RAISED* HIM, RIGHT?

YES...?

SLAM!

I WOULDN'T *BRAG* ABOUT IT!

WASN'T THAT THE LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN PETER BROUGHT TO OUR WEDDING?

I DON'T SEE HOW. HAWAII?

HAWAII.

STOP *SULKING*, ANNIE. YOU'LL GET A BIG *BONUS* FOR THIS.

I *DESERVE* ONE FOR THIS.

I NEED YOU *ALERT* AND *GOOD-HUMORED*. ENGAGE THE *NACC STIMULATOR.**

AT LEAST HE'LL BE *TOLERABLE* ONCE WE'RE DONE. I WON'T HAVE TO SMELL HIS *BURNING HAIR*, OR WORRY ABOUT *ELECTROCUTION.*

PROCESS ACCELERATING.

WHAT *ARE* YOU JABBERING ABOUT?

AT LEAST HE WON'T HAVE THOSE CREEPY *POWERS.*

HEH.

HEH HEH HEH HEH HEH! ANNIE, YOU ARE *DELIGHTFUL!*

WHAT'S SO *FUNNY?*

*NACC = NUCLEUS ACCUMBENS, A COLLECTION OF NEURONS IN THE FOREBRAIN LINKED TO EMOTIONAL STATES--P.H.STEVE.

I'M SORRY. IT'S JUST SO SELDOM I'M *SURPRISED!*

I CAN'T BELIEVE *I* OF *ALL* PEOPLE DIDN'T FORESEE YOUR *CONFUSION*, YOU SMALL-BRAINED *CHILD!*

WE AREN'T *DE*POWERING MR. DILLON...

BA-DEEP-DEEP

YAHTZEE!

...WE'RE *AMPING* HIM UP...PUN *INTENDED!*

HE AND I *DISCUSSED* THIS! THE ONLY WAY TO *STABILIZE* HIM IS TO *ELEVATE* HIM!

BEHOLD...

...ELECTRO 2.0!

WHAT?

VIRUSES! THEY'RE THE CUTTING EDGE OF *ENERGY TECHNOLOGY!*

EXPENSIVE, CUSTOM-ENGINEERED *BACTERIOPHAGES* LINKED TO THE CARBON ATOMS IN DILLON'S *BODY* TO AMPLIFY HIS *BATTERY CAPACITY!*

SIMPLE, PREDICTABLE, BEAUTIFUL, LIVING *VIRUSES--*

STOP THIS NOW!

OH, I DON'T *THINK* SO. AT *THIS* POINT, *NOTHING* CAN STOP--

KARAVASH

MIND KEEPING IT *DOWN?* THE WHOLE *NEIGHBORHOOD* CAN HEAR YOU *CACKLING MANIACALLY* AND--

HEY! IT'S THE *MAD THINKER!*

WOW! IF ELECTRO'S GOTTA BE TEAMED *UP* WITH SOMEBODY, I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW *RELIEVED* I AM IT'S ONLY *YOU!*

CRETINOUS *FOOL!* DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE *DONE?*

I VERY RARELY DO. BUT *ENOUGH* ABOUT ME! LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT *YOU'VE* DONE!

I WAS *SAVING THAT MAN'S LIFE--*

AGGHHHHHH

--AND NOW YOUR *MEDDLING* HAS *KILLED HIM!*

SKRAAK

DYING, AM I?

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING* ABOUT, THINKER!

AND WHAT ARE THE CHANCES OF *THAT*?

I FEEL AMAZING!

OH, YOU *DO*, DO YOU?

THWIPP

THWIPP

THWIPP

WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT *THAT*!

BIG *TALK!* I HADN'T *PLANNED* ON COMING AT ELECTRO *HEAD-ON* RIGHT AWAY...

...BUT NOW WHAT CHOICE DO I *HAVE?*

WEBBING?

AAAHH!

REALLY?

NNNGGH!

PATHETIC.

DID... DID HE JUST TRANSMIT... *HIMSELF* OVER SPIDER-MAN'S WEB?

HE DID! GOOD LORD, SPIDER-MAN'S *INTERFERENCE* HAS TURNED DILLON INTO A *LIVING THUNDERBOLT!*

UNCONTROLLABLE! UNBEATABLE!

I BELIEVE OUR WORK HERE IS *DONE,* ANNIE.

GHUHGGGGHUH

WHAT DID YOU SAY...?

"GHUHGGGGHUH?" THE SOUND *HOMER SIMPSON* MAKES WHEN HE THINKS ABOUT *FOOD?*

THAT IS THE *WORST BATTLE CRY* I HAVE *EVER* HEARD.

THWIP THWIP

PLEASE TELL ME YOU'RE A *LITTLE* EMBARRASSED.

ALWAYS WITH THE *JOKES*, SPIDER-MAN. YOU'RE *NERVOUS*, AREN'T YOU?

MORON. I'M NOT *CONSUMING* POWER...

...*I AM* POWER!

GROSSED OUT IS MORE *LIKE* IT. I WISH YOU WOULDN'T *TALK* WHILE YOU'RE *EATING!*

AND I *AM* SCREWED! *UNLESS...*

WHEN I CAME IN, THINKER HAD ELECTRO HOOKED UP TO THESE *TUBES* TO *DAMP* HIS SURGES! WHATEVER *GOO* IS *IN* THEM...

...MAYBE IT'LL SHORT HIM OUT!

FAAASH

DON'T--!

ZRAAAAK

DILLON?

HMMPH. DISAPPEARED.

LOOK AT THIS PLACE. I'VE TAKEN QUITE A *LOSS* ON THIS DEAL...

...BUT IT'S *WORTH* IT TO BE RID OF *SPIDER-MAN.*

SPIDER-MAN? WHAT, IS HE *DEAD?*

HE *WILL* BE. AND SO WILL *YOU* IF YOU DON'T *HURRY.* WE'RE *OUT.*

COME *ON!*

LET'S *GO!*

I'M SORRY...!

THE DR

FIRE!

-UFFF-

WATCH IT!

YOU'RE WITH ME, DAVIS. FIVE-ALARMER, 53RD AND 10TH.

ANYBODY COOKED?

DOUBTFUL. VACANT WAREHOUSE.

MR. BENNETT! YOU SHOULD SEE THIS!

NOW? IT BETTER BE IMPORTANT.

IT'S ELECTRO, SIR! HE'S JUST POSTED A NEW VIDEO!

A NEW--?

--AND I'M MAXED! I'M JUICED! AND I'M READY FOR US TO PULL THE PLUG ON DEXTER BENNETT ONCE AND FOR ALL, NEW YORK!

THAT DOUBLE-CROSSING...

PARDON?

I'M GOING TO RAZE BENNETT'S *TEMPLE OF LIES* LIKE *JOSHUA* AT *JERICHO!*

BUT I'LL NEED YOUR *HELP*, NEW YORK!

YOUR *POWER!*

IF YOU WANT *JUSTICE*, *GIVE* ME THAT POWER--

--BY TURNING ON *EVERY* LIGHT AND APPLIANCE IN THIS CITY--

--AND *TOGETHER*--WE WILL SHOW THE DB THE *MIGHT OF JUSTICE* ONCE AND FOR *ALL!*

OH MY GOD...

To Be Concluded...!

KLIK!

HRREEEEEE

...AND THE NEW YORK CITY POWER GRID STRAINS TO MEET UNPRECEDENTED DEMANDS THIS EVENING...

CHUTT!

HURRRR

...AS MILLIONS OF CITY-DWELLERS SWITCH ON THEIR EVERY LIGHT AND APPLIANCE IN SUPPORT OF A WELL-KNOWN SUPER-CRIMINAL-TURNED-UNLIKELY-POLITICAL-MAVERICK.

BIP BOOP BAP BEEP

TKK

...BACK TO SEVENTIES SOUNDS WITH E.L.O.

KLIK!

WE'LL GIVE YOU HIS NAME AFTER THE BREAK.

AMPED UP!

NO!

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

PART THREE

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GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

ELECTRO!

YOU'LL GIVE THEM MY NAME NOW!

LOUDER!

HOLY--! WHERE'D HE COME FROM?

IT'S LIKE HE SHOT RIGHT OUTTA THE CAMERA--!

ARE WE ON?

ANSWER ME! IS THIS THING ON?

YES. YES.

GOOD. BECAUSE THE PEOPLE DESERVE THE UNFILTERED TRUTH!

PUBLISHER/LIAR DEXTER BENNETT GOT HIS GOVERNMENT BAILOUT--BUT WHERE'S YOURS, NEW YORK? WHERE'S MINE?

AND HOW DO WE FIGHT POWER LIKE HIS? WITH OURS--THE PEOPLE'S POWER TO TAKE HIM DOWN!

THANKS TO YOU, NYC, ELECTRO IS EVERYWHERE TONIGHT--

--AND I'M RIDING YOUR CURRENT TO VICTORY FOR US ALL!

HEY, JOHNNY! OVER HERE! LOOK WHO I *FOUND!*

SPIDER-MAN? WHAT, DID HE START THIS THING, YOU THINK?

COULD BE! *GET UP,* YOU!

I +KOFF+ I SEE SPOTS. YOU GUYS GOT A *DALMATIAN?*

NOPE.

WELL, *THAT'S* NOT A GOOD SIGN. EVERYONE *ELSE* MAKE IT OUT? *THINKER?* HIS *ASSISTANT?*

WHO?

+KOFF+

+SKTTTCH+ ALL AVAILABLE UNITS TO THE DB BUILDING IMMEDIATELY!

COMPANY 40, RESPOND! HANOVER WAREHOUSE CAN BURN ITSELF OUT-- JUST GET TO THE DB!

ROGER THAT! ON OUR *WAY!*

GOOD THING THAT CALL CAME *AFTER* WE FOUND *YOU,* HUH? YOU WANNA TELL ME WHAT *HAPPENED* HERE?

I'M ASKIN' THE QUESTIONS!

DID +KOFF+ THEY SAY THE *DB BUILDING?*

HOLD ON...GOTTA FIND--

ELECTRO--!

HEY, THANKS FOR THE *RESCUE.* *I MEAN* IT. ONE MORE *FAVOR?*

IN ABOUT *TWO SECONDS,* WHEN I DO SOMETHING *CRAZY* STUPID, JUST *IGNORE* ME AND *LEAVE,* OKAY?

WHAT THE--? *HEY! GET BACK HERE!*

DON'T GO IN THERE! WHAT ARE YOU, NUTS?

JERK! AFTER WE RISKED OUR *BUTTS--!*

ARE WE GOIN' BACK IN?

EXTRICATE

TOO LATE! THE JOINT'S CAVING *IN* ON ITSELF!

WHAT WAS HE *AFTER* IN THERE?

I SWEAR, SOMETIMES IT'S LIKE I'M *TESTING* MY SPIDER-SENSE!

BUT I THINK I GOT A CLUE TO WHAT MIGHT SHUT ELECTRO *DOWN--*

--IF I LIVE TO *USE* IT!

The DB! Building

EVERYBODY OUT! NOW, NOW, NOW!

CLEAR THIS BUILDING!

JUST LIKE THAT? AFTER TWENTY YEARS?

HE'S NOT LAYING US OFF! GET MOVING!

SO IS OLD BENNETT CRACKING UP OR WHAT?

DO YOU READ THE NEWS? WE'RE UNDER ATTACK FROM ELECTRO! EVACUATE!

OH, BELIEVE ME, I AM!

KZAAAAT

GHUNNNH!

THE DOOR'S BOOBY-TRAPPED?

ALL OF 'EM ARE! WE'RE SEALED IN!

BUT MY *WIFE'S* IN THERE--!

SORRY, SON. NO ONE CROSSES THIS LINE!

EVERY ENTRANCE AND EXIT IN THAT WHOLE *BUILDING* IS *ELECTRIFIED!* WE'RE GOING TO NEED A *BATTERING RAM* AND--

AND *WHAT?* HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO *CONTAIN* ELECTRO? THEY'RE TELLIN' US HE CAN POP IN AND OUT OF ANY DAMN *OUTLET* OR *LIGHT BULB* IN *TOWN!*

HOLD EVERYTHING!

I'M IN CHARGE HERE! OR HAS EVERYONE FORGOTTEN THIS IS A DEMOCRACY?

THE CITY ENTRUSTED *YOURS TRULY* WITH HER HIGHEST OFFICE--AND *WHO BETTER* TO LEAD THE WAY OUT OF A CRISIS? OR DO YOU HAVE A *PROBLEM* WITH THAT?

NO, *SIR*, MAYOR JAMESON. JUST TELL US WHAT YOU WANT DONE!

I...I...

DON'T BUST A *FRONTAL LOBE*, BRUSHCUT!

YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD *SPIDER-MAN'S* HERE TO KEEP NEW YORK'S *BACON* FROM BEING *FRIED.*

AGAIN.

AND ALL YOU HAVE TO DO FOR *ME...*

...IS PUT YOUR LITTLE *ANTI-SPIDEY SQUAD* UNDER *MY COMMAND!*

WHAT? NO! WHY?

BECAUSE JUST *SAYING* IT TICKLES ME *PINK.*

ALSO BECAUSE WE HAVE *LIVES* TO SAVE, AND HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GONNA *DO...*

GHAAH!

YOU CAN'T HIDE BENNETT.

SKZZAAK

I CAN FIND YOU ANYWHERE, YOU CROOK!

DO YOU *FEEL* THIS, BENNETT, YOU *PIG*?

THIS ISN'T *MY* POWER!

VILB

SKLRZ

VZZZZ

VZZLRZ

VZZZ

SKLRZ

IT'S THE POWER OF THE *PEOPLE!* THEIR *RAGE* AT *YOU* AND OF THE *GREED* YOU *REPRESENT*...THEIR *HATRED*...

"...SO SWEET...

KSSSHH!

"...AND SO ABUNDANT!

SKAAAAK

VZAAKK!

"AND NO MATTER HOW MUCH I DRINK IN--"

RRRRRRRR

--THERE'S JUST MORE OF IT!

HERE GOES NOTHIN'. AIM CAREFULLY, SPIDEY!

YOU SO MUCH AS GRAZE AN ELECTRIFIED WINDOW FRAME AND IT'S--WAIT FOR IT--

--CURTAINS!

HAR.

HEY, THOUGHT'S-IN-MY-HEAD, YOU AIN'T HELPIN'!

I PAID YOU! I GAVE YOU YOUR BLOOD MONEY!

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

YOU'RE IN THE MEDIA, BENNETT! YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO--

--YOU ALWAYS GIVE THE PUBLIC WHAT IT WANTS!

KSSSSH

SPIDER-MAN!

...AND HIS WINDOW PUNCHING FOOT! EVERYONE FORGETS THAT PART.

AND BY THE WAY, SCRAM!

FZZZK

I'M NOT *KIDDING*, BENNETT! *VAMOOSE--*

--AND LET'S HOPE MY *PLAN* COMES *TOGETHER!*

Directly Underground.

THIS IS *SQUAD ONE!* TARGET *ACQUIRED!*

WE'VE REACHED THE BUILDING'S MAIN *GENERATOR,* PREPARING TO SHUT IT *DOWN!* REPORT *IN,* SQUAD TWO!

THIS IS *SQUAD TWO! DB COMMUNICATIONS SWITCHBOX OUT!*

SPRAAK

SQUAD THREE, WHAT'S YOUR *STATUS?*

SEVERING *ALL* WIRING OF ANY KIND TO THE ENTIRE *BLOCK!*

VZZZT

ELECTRO'S *OFF THE GRID!* MUCH AS I HATE TO *ADMIT* IT...

...IT'S ALL UP TO *SPIDER-MAN* NOW!

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE *POWER?*

WHAT? I *KNOW* I PAID THE *BILL!* MY *CHECK* MUSTA GOT LOST! I BLAME THE *POST OFFICE* AND MY VERY POST-DATED CHECK.!

WHAT DID YOU DO TO THE POWER?

KRAK

HOW COME IT'S ALWAYS MY FAULT?

MAYBE IT'S THE MEDIA. OR SARAH PALIN. OR CORN SYRUP. AND HEY, WHOEVER THOUGHT A TALK SHOW AT 10:00 COULD *WORK?*

VZZAKK

SHUT!

UP!

MAN, YOU ARE A BUILDING CODE *NIGHTMARE!*

MY BUILDING!

WHAT'S HE DOING TO MY BUILDING?

I WASN'T AWARE IT WAS STILL *YOURS,* MR.--

SKRAAK

HE'S SPEAKING *FIGURATIVELY,* ROOKIE. WHAT'RE YOU, FROM OUTTA *TOWN?*

AND IT'S PRACTICALLY *MY OWN FAULT!* WHY DID I TRUST THAT BUNGLING *WALL-CRAWLER?* HE'S PROBABLY IN *CAHOOTS* WITH ELECTRO! HE HAS TO BE *STOPPED!*

YOU! GIVE ME YOUR *FLASHLIGHT!* THAT'S AN *ORDER!*

MISTER MAYOR YOU HAVE TO CALM DOWN--

MR. MAYOR! YOU CAN'T GO IN!!

THE DR

MR. MAYOR!

KEEP IT *UP,* SUNSHINE--

KZAAAK

YOU'RE JUST *DRAINING* YOURSELF!

ZRAAK

AND WITH NO *WATTAGE* TO RIDE OUT OF HERE--

SKRZ

--YOU'RE A *PRISONER!*

OH, *YEAH,* GENIUS?

VZZZK

LOOK HOW "TRAPPED" I AM!

FOOL.

VIZZT

GREAT. HE COULD BE ANYWH--

I'VE PUT UP WITH YOUR WISE-ASS FOR YEARS AND I'VE HAD IT!

JUST DIE!

SKZAAAK

...UNNNNNHH...

THAT WAS HIS HARSHEST HIT *YET*. THANK GOD I WASN'T *GROUNDED*.

IF I HADN'T JUMPED UP IN THE NICK OF TIME, I'D BE *DEAD* NOW. I CAN'T TAKE ANOTHER *SHOT* LIKE THAT...

THIS WASN'T...

...WASN'T THE *PLAN*...

BENNETT... WHERE'S BENNETT...?

THWIPP

...SO WHILE HE'S *FLESH AND BLOOD*...IT'S TIME TO PLAY MY *ACE!*

=HNNNGH=

THWAM

Ground Floor.

UNNH!

BENNETT! OUT OF MY WAY, YOU COWARD!

Upstairs.

FWAM!

HEY, SPARKY! REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE CONDUCTING YOURSELF ALONG MY WEB?

LOOKS LIKE I FIGURED OUT A WORKAROUND, HUH?

UNNGHH!

KRAANCH

GHAAH!

GHAAH. MIGHT WANNA THINK TWICE ABOUT PUNCHING HIM INTO ANY MORE LOAD-BEARING COLUMNS...

...OR HE'LL BE THE DEATH OF US BOTH!

JAMESON! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

STANDING UP FOR SOMETHING I BUILT! THE BUGLE!

DESPITE ALL THE CHEAP MAKEUP YOU TARTED HER UP WITH, THERE'S STILL A GRAND OLD LADY UNDERNEATH--

--AND I WON'T LET HER FALL BECAUSE OF SOME LOW-RENT DILETTANTE WITH A GRUDGE!

TELL ME EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE!

NOW!

THE *CHEMICAL GOOP* THE *THINKER* WAS USING TO *CONTROL* YOUR *UPGRADE?* I NOTICED HOW YOU *FLINCHED* WHEN YOU NEARLY GOT *HOSED* WITH IT--

--SO I *GRABBED* SOME OUT OF THE BURNING *LAB* AND WHIPPED UP A NEW *WEB COMPOUND!*

YOU'RE *DONE*, MAN. AND YOU WERE *SO CLOSE.*

NO! NOT *THIS* TIME! THIS WAS MY *MOMENT!*

I HAD THE *POWER!* PEOPLE *LISTENED* TO ME!

I WAS THE HERO THIS TIME!

ZAAAAAK

⇂HWUUH!↾

OH, *NO*, YOU DON'T!

YOU DON'T GET AWAY *THAT* EASY!

AND BY "*EASY*," I MEAN "*THROUGH FORTY STORIES OF SKYSCRAPER...*"!

KRAKOOOM

HOLD ON. I *APOLOGIZE*, JONAH. I ALWAYS THOUGHT OF YOU AS A DIM-WITTED, TASTELESS, NOUVEAU-RICHE *BUFFOON*.

...BUT YOU'RE *RIGHT*...THIS IS *YOUR* PAPER. IT ALWAYS *WAS*.

WHAT?

GO TAKE HER *BACK*, MR. MAYOR.

I WAS JUST *THERE*. ELECTRO'S *GONE*...BUT THE *WALL-CRAWLER* IS *TOTALLY AT YOUR MERCY*...

...YOU STUPID, CREDULOUS *HACK*.

I'VE LOST NEARLY *EVERYTHING* TODAY, DAMN IT...

STAIRS

...BUT AT LEAST I GET TO SEE THAT IDIOT *JAMESON* GO DOWN WITH THE--

--THE--

TIK!

CHIK

CHAK

THWIP

REVOLUTION'S *OVER*, ROBESPIERRE!

NOW YOU CAN GO BACK TO YOUR *DAY JOB:* GETTING *BEATEN* LIKE A *FIVE-DOLLAR PINATA!*

THWIP

SP...

KOFF!

SPIDER-MAN...

...HELP...

...ME...

BENNETT!

BENNETT, HOLD ON!

...DEAD...I WANTED HIM *DEAD*...

DON'T WASTE ENERGY *THINKING* ABOUT IT! ELECTRO'S NOT A *THREAT* ANYMORE!

TRY NOT TO *MOVE!*

C'MON, YOU ORNERY OLD *COOT!* HANG *IN* THERE!

YOU!

THIS IS LIKE A DREAM COME *TRUE* FOR YOU, *ISN'T* IT, YOU MASKED--

--OH, GOOD GOD. DEXTER--?

I'VE GOTTA GET HIM *OUT* OF HERE! FOLLOW *ME!*

DON'T *MOVE* HIM! I'LL GET THE *PARAMEDICS!*

THERE'S *NO TIME!* JONAH, LISTEN TO THAT *RUMBLING!* WE *HAVE* TO GO!

RRRKKK-KK-K

NOW! *RUN!*

GO!

NO...

...NO NO NO NO NO...

DB

KRAB KRAB BOOM

NYPD

"HOW'S JONAH?"

"FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, HE'S SPEECHLESS.

FRONT LINE

TAPS FOR THE BUGLE

Landmark Felled
Owner/Publisher
Critically Injure

Heat wave subsides, Cold Front moves in

The battlefield widens for House GOP seats

RISE IN BRI
TESTS INTE
OF U.S. BO

"AND I CAN'T EVEN BRING MYSELF TO ENJOY IT. HOW'RE YOU, BETTS?"

I'M JUST... NUMB, PETER. I CAN'T PROCESS THIS.

BENNETT'LL NEVER WALK AGAIN...AND HIS MEDIA EMPIRE IS DEAD.

THERE'S NO MONEY TO REBUILD AFTER A DISASTER LIKE THIS, AND PROBABLY NO DESIRE.

SURE, IT HASN'T EXACTLY BEEN THE BUGLE WE KNEW SINCE JONAH SOLD IT, BUT STILL...

DO YOU REALIZE THIS BUILDING'S THE ONLY PLACE I EVER WORKED IN MY ENTIRE ADULT LIFE?

WE MET HERE.

IT WAS THE DAY I SOLD MY FIRST PHOTO TO JONAH.

YOU WERE WEARING A RED BLOUSE.

WHO COULD FORGET THAT?

DID YOU EVER STOP TO WONDER HOW YOUR LIFE MIGHT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT IF YOU'D TAKEN THOSE SNAPSHOTS TO THE HERALD THAT DAY INSTEAD?

HONESTLY? NO.

MY LIFE WITHOUT THE BUGLE IN IT IS BEYOND MY IMAGINATION.

LATELY, JONAH'S BEEN SAYING TO ME THAT HE THINKS HE GOT OUT OF THE NEWSPAPER BUSINESS JUST IN TIME...

...BUT NEITHER OF US REALLY BELIEVED IT.

BETTY *NAILED* IT. FOR HER, AND ME, AND *JONAH*, AND THOUSANDS OF *OTHERS*...

...THIS DAY IS THE *DIVIDING LINE* BETWEEN EVERYTHING THAT EVER HAPPENED, AND EVERYTHING THAT EVER *WILL*.

GOOD MEMORIES AND THE *BAD*...

DAILY BUGLE

SPIDER-MAN MENACE

...THAT'S ALL THAT'S *LEFT*.

WOW, MAN, WHO THOUGHT IT'D BE A C-LISTER LIKE *ELECTRO* WHO'D DELIVER THE BLOW? GUESS IT JUST GOES TO SHOW...

...EVEN THE *ALSO-RANS* CAN UPGRADE WHEN YOU'RE NOT PAYING *ATTENTION*.

MAN, IF *THAT* GUY CAN TURN HEAVYWEIGHT...

...IMAGINE THE TROUBLE I'D BE IN IF SPIDEY'S *OTHER* ENEMIES STARTED LEVELING UP...

Epilogue.

MAN, I WOULDN'T BE *YOU* RIGHT NOW FOR *ANYTHING.*

ONE MINUTE YOU'RE THE VOICE OF THE *PEOPLE...*

THE *NEXT*, YOU'RE THE MOST *HATED MAN* IN *NEW YORK.* AND I DON'T THINK *THAT'S* GONNA CHANGE, LIKE, *EVER.*

HOW THOSE *POWER DAMPERS* FEELING, BY THE WAY? COMFY?

WHY DON'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME *ALONE*, YOU LOUSY--

I DON'T *THINK* SO.

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE *ALONE* FOR *AWHILE,* MAX.

WHAT'S *THIS?* WHO *ARE* YOU PEOPLE?

YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN *ME*, MAX. THE *CHAMELEON?*

I'M HERE TO *INTRODUCE* YOU TO SOMEONE.

MEET SASHA KRAVINOFF. SHE'S AN OLD FRIEND OF THE FAMILY.

Next: Sandman!

THE OTHER WOMAN

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SO, HOW WAS YOUR DAY, DARLING?

YOU'RE KIDDING RIGHT?

UM, IF I SAY "HELL YES" WILL THAT TURN YOU OFF?

NOT AS LONG AS YOU PURR IT...

CONFESSION... I'M LYING. YOU CAUGHT ME. THE STONE COLD FACT IS BLACK CAT REALLY DOESN'T WANT TO KNOW ABOUT MY DAY IF I SPENT ANY PORTION OF IT OUT OF THE RED AND BLUES, AND IT SORT OF BUGS ME

IT'S HER THING. KEEPING THIS "RELATIONSHIP" BETWEEN THE CAT AND THE SPIDER... NOTHING *MORE*.

BUT I'M NOT SO SURE THAT'S *POSSIBLE*.

I CAN SEE HER POINT - THE WHOLE SECRET IDENTITY THING CAN BE A MAJOR DRAG...

NNG! DON'T WORRY, I WASN'T USING THOSE RIBS...

ESPECIALLY AT RUSH HOUR. DOWNTOWN. WHEN YOU'RE MEETING SOMEONE ON THE *STREET* AND DROPPING FROM THE SKY IN WEB-COVERED PAJAMAS MIGHT RAISE EYEBROWS.

PETER!

HEY, TIGER! GIVING THE STOCK MARKET A GO TODAY?

OR, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVING AN EX WHO YOU MIGHT RANDOMLY BUMP INTO... MARY JANE WATSON.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL I EVER LOST.

SMART MAN.

DIDN'T YOU HEAR? "PARKER STOCK" IS GOING THROUGH THE ROOF.

I'M GONNA SELL ALL MY SHARES AND RETIRE FROM THE ME BUSINESS. MOVING INTO "SMITHS." THEY NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE.

THEN SHE SAYS SOMETHING ABOUT MEETING THE PRODUCER OF HER TV SHOW... BUT I DON'T HEAR A WORD SHE'S SAYING.

EVEN THOUGH I'M WATCHING HER LIPS THE WHOLE TIME.

SO IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT I AM ABOUT TO SAY SOMETHING STUPID LIKE, "LET'S GET DINNER RIGHT NOW AT 10 AM--"

SPLASH

PETER!

WHEN THE *UNIVERSE* STOPS ME FROM EMBARRASSING MYSELF.

THANKS *UNIVERSE*. YOU'RE A REAL *PAL*.

SO BACK TO THE WHOLE SECRET IDENTITY BIZ...

...EVEN THOUGH I SHOULD KNOW BETTER... I POKE. TO SEE WHAT GIVES.

I SAW AN OLD GIRLFRIEND TODAY.

WHY, SPIDER, I DO BELIEVE YOU'RE TRYING TO GET ME *JEALOUS*.

SMOOTH... *SUE STORM* ISN'T THIS TRANSPARENT.

THOUGH SHE *DID* OPEN A CAN OF TRIPLE STRENGTH WHUP ASS ON THESE GUYS AS SOON AS I MENTIONED IT... SO MAYBE...

SWEETHEART, YOU COULD TELL ME YOU RAN INTO YOUR *WIFE* TODAY--

S'NO MY BUSINESS, *BABY*.

MMF?

I THINK THE LADY DOTH PROTEST TOO MUCH...

SO LONG AS WHEN YOU'RE WITH ME, YOU'RE WITH ME.

...YOU CAN SPEND TIME WITH *WHOMEVER*.

WOK

MAYBE SHE *DOES* GET JEALOUS... MAYBE--

IS "WHOMEVER" PROPER ENGLISH? I'VE NOTICED THAT YOU GET A LOT MORE GRAMMATICAL WHENEVER YOU'RE JEALOUS?

IT'S OVER.

THEY WON'T TOUCH YOU AGAIN. EVER.

I'M PUNCHING GUYS IN THE FACE TRYING TO MIND-READ MY FWB...

...AND SHE'S TOTALLY FOCUSED ON THE *GOAL*.

MAYBE... I'M A *HELL* OF A LOT MORE SELF-CENTERED THAN I THINK.

I PROMISE. COME OUT AND WE'LL GET YOU SOME HELP.

ONE SECOND, SHE'S EVERY GUY'S FANTASY COME TO LIFE AND TOO HOT TO BE TRUE...

...AND IN AN *INSTANT*, SHE TRANSFORMS INTO A *CRISIS COUNSELLOR*, WHO WILL GET THIS WOMAN THE HELP SHE NEEDS COME HELL OR HIGH WATER.

IT'S COMPLICATED, NORAH.

NO IT ISN'T.

YOU MAKE THE "SPECIAL HUG" WITH SOME BIMB WHO DOESN'T WANT MORE, THAT'S THAT. NO GUILT. YOU CAN SEE WHOEV WHENEV.

THE FACT THAT YOU'RE SHILLING FOR JAMESON WHEN YOU SHOULD BE BLOWING UP HIS SPOT...

THAT'S SOMETHING TO BE GUILTY ABOUT.

IT'S A TOTAL *LOB*. I COULD SPIKE HER DOWN RIGHT NOW WITH A DIG ABOUT HER *CHOKE* WHEN SHE HAD THE CHANCE TO REPORT ON OSBORN...

BUT THEN SHE *NORAHS ME.*

BY THE WAY, HAVE YOU EVER PICTURED ME NAKED?

I- WHAT--?

AND AM I SANS OR AVEC DESERT TOPPING?

AND IT'S THAT SPLIT-SECOND OF HORMONE POISONING THAT MAKES ME IGNORE THE SPIDEY SENSE AND--

BUT THIS ISN'T ABOUT NORAH. I DON'T THINK... MAYBE...

I AM SO MESSED IN THE HEAD.

YOU'RE GOOD.

WOW, AND WE STILL HAVE OUR CLOTHES ON.

I MEAN WITH *HER*. YOU WERE AMAZING. THE WAY YOU SHIFT GEARS... IT'S SO *SMOOTH*.

THANKS, SPIDER...

BUT WHY DON'T WE TALK ABOUT THE *GEARS* YOU'RE REALLY THINKING ABOUT.

WHICH WOULD BE?

YOU'RE RETHINKING OUR *FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS* ARRANGEMENT.

WONDERING IF IT'S "OKAY". TRYING TO MEASURE IT AGAINST SOME STANDARD.

THE GUILTY ONES.

WONDERING IF IT'S A *MISTAKE*.

I GAVE UP TWO THINGS A LONG TIME AGO. *GUILT* AND *SUFFERING*.

BEING WITH YOU CAUSES ME *NEITHER* OF THESE FEELINGS, THEREFORE, IT'S A GOOD THING.

BUT IF IT'S NOT THE SAME IN YOUR WEBBED-HEAD, JUST SAY SO. WE'LL CALL IT QUITS RIGHT NOW.

YOUR LOSS...BUT NO HARM NO FOUL.

BUT--

SO WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE?

IS SPIDER-MAN ALLOWED ONE GUILTY PLEASURE?

IT'S AMAZING WHAT I'LL LET MYSELF DO WHEN SOMEONE GIVES ME *PERMISSION.*

THE FUNNY THING IS...

Hospit

I *DID* HAVE SOMETHING ON MY MIND TODAY...

SOME *GUILT*...

NOT ABOUT THE *ETHICS* OF OUR RELATIONSHIP...

...WASN'T ABOUT ANOTHER WOMAN...

BUT IT *WAS* ABOUT AN EX...

NICE CATCH.

AND A SECRET.

PARKER! GOOD LORD, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DOCUMENTING MY TENURE NOT ATTACKING MY STAFF!

IT WAS JUST AN *ACCIDENT*, MR. MAYOR. NO PROBLEM.

AN "*ACCIDENT*." YEAH. JUST LIKE SHE *ACCIDENTALLY* SOUNDS AND SMELLS EXACTLY LIKE ANOTHER WOMAN I *TRIP* AROUND. HELLO *BLACK CAT*.

PETER PAR-

PARKER. I KNOW. IT'S MY *JOB*.

ASHLEY MOON, DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATIONS.

PETE, YOU NEED A NAPKIN? YOU GOT LIKE A DROOLY THING HAPPENING.

AND I WAS GONNA TELL HER, RIGHT THERE...

SO YOU'RE WORKING WITH MAYOR JAMESON? GUESS WE'LL BE SEEING A LOT OF EACH OTHER--

NOT IF I CAN HELP IT.

PRESS CONFERENCE IN THREE, PEOPLE! PARKER, STOP FRATERNIZING!

FRATERNIZING ALL OVER HIS PANTS. GROW UP, PARKER.

...BUT SPIDER-MAN *IS* ALLOWED A GUILTY PLEASURE...

AND THIS ONE JUST MADE WORK A *LOT* MORE INTERESTING.

THE END

HOW DARE THEY?

MR. MAYOR! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

LATVERIA! THE SAVAGE LAND! THE STINKING NEGATIVE ZONE! ANYPLACE WITH NO REPORTERS!

BUT YOU ACED THE PRESS CONFERENCE.

OH, DID I? YOU'RE AN IDIOT, LUBECK! CLEAN OUT YOUR DESK!

SIR, YOU HAVE A BUDGET MEETING WITH THE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN FIVE--

CANCEL IT! WHO DO THOSE SCHOOL-HUGGERS THINK I AM, SANTA CLAUS?

ON SECOND THOUGHT, PHILLIPS, YOU RUN IT! AND TELL THEM TO QUIT GOING THROUGH CHALK LIKE IT'S FREE!

BUT I CAN'T TELL THEM--

THEN CLEAN OUT YOUR THINGS! AND IF ANYONE WANTS ME FOR THE REST OF THE DAY, THEY'RE FIRED, TOO!

THE IRRITABLE J. JONAH JAMESON

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AFTERNOON, MAYOR JAMESO--

DRIVE! JUST DRIVE!

YOU LUCKY SON OF A GUN.

NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT BUT STOPPING FOR ***RED LIGHTS,*** FILLING THE ***GAS TANK*** AND PICKING THE STUPIDEST ***RADIO STATION.***

HATE TO ***CORRECT*** YOU, SIR, BUT I ***DO*** WORRY ABOUT MORE THAN--

WHO ***ASKED*** YOU? WATCH THE ***ROAD.*** THE CITY ISN'T PAYING YOU TO ***CHIT-CHAT.***

ACTUALLY, SIR, I'M ***NOT*** YOUR DRIVER, SO THE CITY ISN'T PAYING ME ***AT ALL...***

...AND WE ***ARE*** GOING TO HAVE A ***LONG CHAT.***

GHUUUH...

THERE'S COFFEE.

COME ON.

IT'LL CLEAR YOUR HEAD.

HUKK

TOO MUCH?

SORRY.

WHERE **AM** I? WHO ARE **YOU?** WHERE'S MY **REAL** DRIVER?

HE'S PASSED OUT IN HIS OWN BED. HE'LL BE FINE, SIR.

I'M EMIL NASON. AND YOU'RE... **SOMEPLACE.**

I'M AFRAID YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET **USED** TO IT. JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

OH, **REALLY.**

YOU'RE **KIDNAPPING** ME.

YOU'RE KIDNAPPING **ME!** DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH **TROUBLE** YOU'RE IN? **DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?**

OH, YES SIR...

DAILY BUGLE
SPIDER HAZARD
DAILY BUGLE
THE SPIDER-MAN MENACE
WHY WON'T HE SHOW HIS FACE?
DAILY BUGLE
$10,000 REWARD
DAILY BUGLE
SPIDER-MAN: SOCIALIST
DAILY BUGLE
SPIDER-MAN TIP-LINE: SEE BAD INFO
DAILY BUGLE
SPIDER-MAN RUINING OUR KIDS
DAILY BUGLE
JAMESON: SPIDER-M
IS NO HERO
DAILY BUGLE
BUGLE TO COPS: ARREST THIS MENACE
MENACE
DAILY BUGLE
YOU'RE MY HERO.
DAILY BUGLE
SPIDER-MAN IS SECRETLY ELECTRO
BUGLE
BUGLE

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

YOU. BACK IN THE *FIGHT.* REMEMBER YOUR OWN WORDS? I DO.

THE SPIDER MENACE

"*ANYONE* WITH TOO MUCH POWER IS LIABLE TO TURN INTO A MENACE SOONER OR LATER. AND *SPIDER-MAN* IS NO *EXCEPTION.*"

I DON'T WRITE EDITORIALS ANYMORE.

SO WHAT? YOU *VOWED* TO FIGHT HIM... TO *EXPOSE* HIM. TO *DESTROY* HIM.

WELL, *WE* CAN DO IT AS A *TEAM!* I BELIEVE IN THIS AS MUCH AS *YOU* DO!

AND HOW ARE *WE* SUPPOSED TO BEAT *SPIDER-MAN?*

WITH *WEAPONS.* YOU CAN BUY *ANYTHING* ON THE INTERNET.

LOOK! THE BEETLE'S *SUCTION GLOVE!* HE FOUGHT SPIDER-MAN A *BUNCH* OF TIMES, AND I OWN ONE OF HIS GLOVES!

YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND.

...

IF...IF YOU THINK *THAT...*

YOU DIDN'T *MEAN* WHAT YOU WROTE. YOU WERE *USING* ME. USING *EVERYONE.* TO SELL YOUR *PAPERS.*

GHAAAH

GHUURH

MR. JAMESON!

OH, NO. OH, NO.

I **FORGOT** YOUR **BAD HEART.** AND I **KNEW** ABOUT IT.

STUPID, **STUPID.** I NEVER MEANT FOR THIS TO--

HA!

YOU WERE **FAKING?**

LYING TO ME? **AGAIN?**

OH, **GROW UP,** YOU **HEAD CASE.**

YOUR CRAZY PROBLEMS AREN'T MY FAULT!

LISTEN TO ME, YOU NUT. THIS HAPPENED AT THE WRONG TIME. OR THE RIGHT TIME. I DON'T KNOW.

I GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY. LIVE ON TV, AND THEY RIPPED ME UP. AND YOU KNOW WHAT I DID?

I STARTED HATING REPORTERS.

I'VE SPENT MY *LIFE* IN NEWSPAPERS. *BELIEVING* IN THEM. BUT A FEW LOUSY WEEKS IN GOVERNMENT WAS ENOUGH TO KNOCK IT OUT OF ME.

THEN *YOU* SHOWED UP.

I *DO* LIKE YOUR IDEAS, SON. I SHOULD. THEY'RE MINE, AND I STILL MEAN THEM.

'COURSE, *YOU* RAN THEM 50 YARDS BEYOND THE GOALPOST. BUT I *LIKE* BEING REMINDED OF WHAT I THINK. MAYBE I *NEED* IT.

SO TELL ME YOU OWN A SUIT.

WHAT?

THE NEXT DAY...

PHILLIPS! WHERE ARE *YOU* GOING?

YOU--YOU FIRED ME, SIR.

FELT GOOD. COME BACK, I'LL DO IT *EVERY* TUESDAY. HECK, TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS.

AND TRY NOT TO CRY NEXT TIME. LOOKS AWFUL.

YES SIR. THANK YOU, SIR.

OH, AND YOU'LL BE THIS NUT'S BOSS. MY NEW ADVISOR, OR GOFER, OR SOMETHING. ARNOLD NELSON.

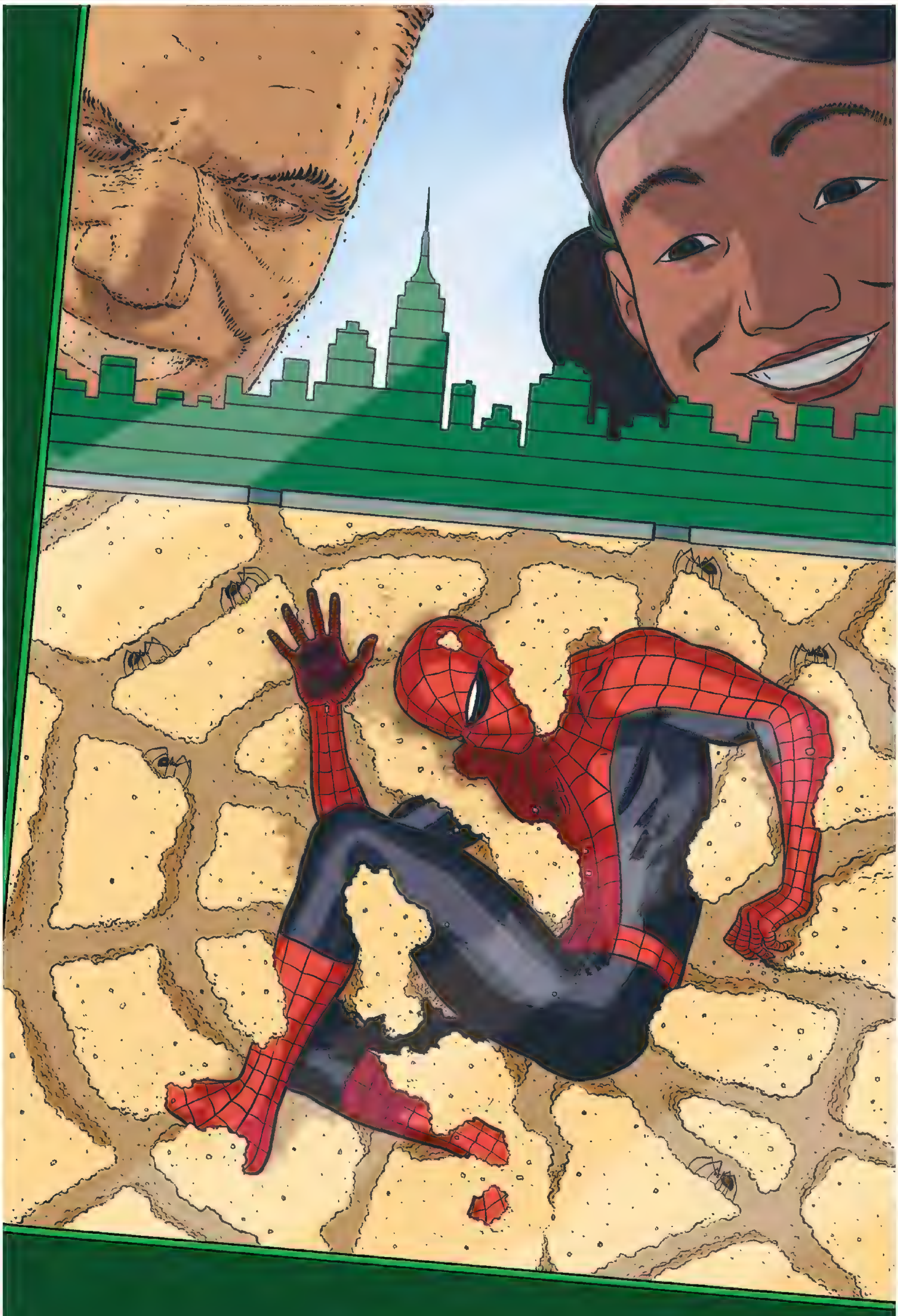
EMIL NASON.

ARNOLD NASON. WATCH HIM LIKE A HAWK. HE THOUGHT HE KIDNAPPED *ME* TODAY--

--BUT HE GOT IT BACKWARDS.

EXCELSIOR!

END



MY NAME IS *KEEMIA.*

MAMA SAYS THAT MEANS "*ALCHEMY*" IN PERSIAN.

THERE ISN'T REALLY A PERSIA ANYMORE. I MEAN THERE *IS*, BUT THEY CALL IT SOMETHING *DIFFERENT* NOW AND I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT ITS NEW NAME IS.

I AM A *PRINCESS.*

FROM CARTOONS AND PICTURE BOOKS YOU'D THINK I GET WAITED ON BY SERVANTS AND PICK OUT FANCY DRESSES AND SIT IN BATHS AND THAT'S ALL I DO.

BUT THAT IS *NOT TRUE!!!*

BEING A PRINCESS IS A LOT OF *HARD!! WORK!!*

MY KINGDOM IS *REAL* (NOT LIKE *PERSIA*) AND I HAVE TO WALK UP AND DOWN IT EACH DAY MAKING SURE MY SUBJECTS ARE *HAPPY* AND *BEHAVING* THEMSELVES.

YOU MIGHT THINK THAT BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY OTHER *KIDS* AROUND, I'D GET *LONELY.*

'CEPT THAT'S *NOT TRUE.*

THERE WERE *LOTS AND LOTS* OF KIDS THE LAST PLACE I LIVED, WITH MAMA AND ABUELA, BUT *THIS* IS *SOOOOO* MUCH BETTER.

THE KING TAKES CARE OF EVERYTHING. *DADDY.*

HE MAKES SURE THERE'S *MOVIES* IN THE *THEATER.*

THAT THERE'S *FOOD* IN THE *RESTAURANT.*

SOMETIMES I MISS **MAMA** AND **ABUELA**.

BUT DADDY SAYS HE'S GOING TO BRING THEM TO COME LIVE WITH US REAL SOON.

ALTHOUGH BEING JUST WITH **DADDY** IS COOL TOO.

HIS VOICE IS ALL **GRAVELLY** AND WHEN HE TELLS ME HE **LOVES** ME IT'S A **RUMBLE**, LIKE **THUNDER**, OR LIKE THE WAY THE **GROUND SHAKES** WHEN THE **SUBWAY** PASSES UNDERNEATH.

HE'S **EVERYWHERE**, ALL AT ONCE.

AND MAKES SURE WHATEVER I **NEED**, I **GET**.

AND THAT'S WHAT MAKES HIM THE *BEST* DADDY IN THE WHOLE, WIDE *WORLD*.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN IN KEEMIA'S CASTLE

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HEY, BOSS-LADY-- I GOT YOUR TEXT!

WHERE'S THE FIRE *THIS* TIME, GLORY?

PETER! THANK GOODNESS!

THE PRESS SECRETARY'S OFFICE IS JUGGLING *SIXTEEN CRISES* AT ONCE AFTER ELECTRO'S ATTACK. YOU CAN TAKE *ONE* OFF MY HANDS, AT LEAST.

LAST ISH --SHOCKING STEVE

THEN I CAN DEVOTE ALL *MY* TIME TO CONVINCING THAT SUCK-UP ANDERSON *NOT* TO SHOW HIS PROPOSED "*FREEDOM OF THE PRESS TOWER*" FOR THE D.B. SITE TO THE *PUBLIC*...

OY.

WILL WE ALL HAVE JOBS TOMORROW?

WE HAVE 'EM *NOW*, SO I NEED YOU TO GET TO THE POLICE *CRIME LAB* ASAP-- SNAP SOME PHOTOS OF IT LOOKING *CLEAN* AND *EFFICIENT* FOR THIS EVENING'S *PRESS RELEASE!*

FRONT LINE IS REPORTING A BUNCH OF *EVIDENCE* WALKED OUT OF THERE OVER THE WEEKEND (AND HOW *THEY* FOUND OUT, *I'D* LIKE TO KNOW)--

--AND WE NEED TO GET *AHEAD* OF THE STORY BEFORE EVERY *DEFENSE LAWYER* IN THE TRI-STATE AREA IS CALLING FOR *NEW TRIALS* FOR THEIR DIRTBAG CLIENTS DUE TO LAB IRREGULARITIES!

WE *HAVE* TO SPIN THIS AS AN *ISOLATED INCIDENT*, BLAME IT ON THE CARELESS TECH ON DUTY...

...SOME NOOB NAMED "*CARLIE COOPER*"!

CARLIE?

The DB Building.

GOTTA LOVE THIS CONSISTENTLY *INCONSISTENT* NEW YORK WEATHER, HUH?

UNSEASONABLE HEAT WAVE *ONE* WEEK--UNSEASONABLE COLD SNAP THE *NEXT*...

LOOK AT HER, ROBBIE.

LOOK AT WHAT THAT MONSTER ELECTRO *DID* TO MY BUILDING. HE'S *GUTTED* MY ONE TRUE *HOME*.

OUR HOME, JONAH. ONCE.

MY GOD.

LOOKS EVEN WORSE IN *REAL LIFE*.

DIDN'T THINK THAT WAS *POSSIBLE*...

REMEMBER OUR *RECOUNT THANKSGIVING* IN YOUR OFFICE?

HAH! OPEN-FACED TURKEY SANDWICHES IN ALUMINUM TRAYS FROM THE DINER AROUND THE CORNER... MARTHA WOULDN'T SPEAK TO ME FOR A *WEEK*.

MARLA CALLED LOOKING FOR ME, AND I TOLD HER:

"WE CAN'T LEAVE THE BUGLE *NOW*! OUR SOURCE INSIDE THE FLORIDA SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE SAYS THEY MIGHT MAKE A SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE *HANGING CHADS*!"

AND THEN *SHE* SAYS:

"WHO IS THIS *CHAD* AND *WHY* IS HE RUINING MY *THANKSGIVING*?"

HAHAHAHAHA!

OH... MY.

YEAH...

FIRE CHIEF SAYS...IT'S TOO *UNSTABLE* TO RISK GOING INSIDE TO PLANT DEMOLITION CHARGES.

THEY'LL HAVE TO DISMANTLE THE REST OF HER BRICK-BY-BRICK FROM THE *OUTSIDE*...MURDER HER BY *INCHES*.

THEY'RE JUST WAITING FOR ME, THE *CITY*, TO DECLARE HER A *RUIN*. SEIZE IT UNDER EMINENT DOMAIN.

THE ORDER'S LYING ON MY DESK, WAITING TO BE SIGNED.

BUT...

I *CAN'T*. I JUST *CAN'T*.

WHAT SHOULD I *DO*, ROBBIE?

YOU USUALLY HAVE AN *OPINION* ON THAT, AS I RECALL.

I THINK...

...YOU SHOULD DO THE *RIGHT THING*, MR. MAYOR.

AND I *KNOW* YOU.

YOU *WILL*.

N.Y.P.D. Forensics Investigations Division Laboratory, Jamaica, Queens.

YEESH... HOW THINGS *CHANGE*...

...IN THE *BUGLE* DAYS, THIS IS *JUST* THE KIND OF STORY GLORY AND I WOULD BE TRYING TO BLOW *WIDE OPEN*...

...BUT NOW WE'RE *GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES*, TRYING TO KEEP AS *TIGHT* A LID ON IT AS *POSSIBLE*.

IN *BOTH* CASES, WE'RE DOING WHAT WE THINK IS *BEST* FOR THE CITY.

THIS ONE'S A LITTLE MORE *COMPLICATED*, THOUGH...CARLIE'S BEEN A *GREAT FRIEND* TO MY BEST BUD, HARRY OSBORN, AND ME.

I THOUGHT MAYBE SHE WANTED TO BE SOMETHING *MORE*, BUT...

I'M SORRY, CARLIE...WE'VE BEEN ASKED TO ESCORT YOU FROM THE BUILDING...

JUST A *SECOND!*

PETER, YOU *HAVE* TO BELIEVE ME!

I LOCKED UP THREE *MURDER WEAPONS* SO I COULD RUN SOME MORE *TESTS* ON THEM IN THE MORNING...

...RIGHT HERE, IN THESE *HERMETICALLY SEALED* LOCKERS...

...BUT WHEN I OPENED UP SHOP AT EIGHT A.M...

"...THEY WERE *GONE!*

"SECURITY CAMERAS SHOW NO ONE CAME IN OR OUT OF THIS ROOM DURING THAT TIME...

"THE DIGITAL LOGS ON THE LOCKS SHOW NO ONE EVEN TRIED TO *OPEN* THEM!"

EVIDENCE EVID

HMH. THE CASES THESE WEAPONS BELONG TO...

...WHAT ARE THEY LIKE, CARLIE?

ALL *MURDERS*, COMMITTED OVER THE WEEKEND...

NO EYEWITNESSES, NO SUSPECTS, NO *FINGERPRINTS* ON ANY OF THE WEAPONS.

"FIRST ONE, *HERMAN COHEN,* LAWYER. 67. CAUCASIAN MALE. FOUND IN A DUMPSTER BEHIND HIS OFFICE AT 11:45, FRIDAY NIGHT.

"STABBED TO DEATH WITH AN *ICE PICK.* TIME OF DEATH APPROXIMATELY 10:30PM.

"*ALMA ALVARADO,* 31. HISPANIC FEMALE. EMPLOYEES DISCOVERED HER BODY IN THE CELL PHONE STORE SHE MANAGED AT ABOUT TEN A.M. SUNDAY MORNING.

"BLUDGEONED TO DEATH WITH *BALL-PEEN HAMMER.* TIME OF DEATH APPROXIMATELY HALF-PAST ELEVEN THE PREVIOUS SATURDAY NIGHT.

"*DESHAWN PRICE,* 26. AFRICAN-AMERICAN MALE. CONCERT PROMOTER. GIRLFRIEND FOUND HIS BODY IN THE BATHTUB OF HIS APARTMENT AROUND DUSK ON SUNDAY.

"*HUNTING KNIFE* WAS STILL LODGED IN HIS HEART. BY TIME OF DEATH...SHE MUST HAVE JUST MISSED THE KILLER BY *MINUTES.*

WOW. THAT'S SOME *RECALL* YOU GOT THERE...

YOU SEE? I'M *GOOD* AT MY JOB, PETER! THEY SAY *CITY HALL* IS GOING TO TRY AND PIN ALL THIS ON *ME,* BUT I *KNOW* I FOLLOWED PROPER PROCEDURE!

C'MON, COOPER, *TIME'S UP.*

YOU'RE *SUSPENDED WITHOUT PAY* PENDING A FULL INVESTIGATION...

YOU *CAN'T* LET THE MAYOR PIN THIS ON ME, PETE! YOU *CAN'T!*

DON'T WORRY, CARLIE.

WE *WON'T.*

South Bronx.
That Night.

♪ SPIDER-SLEUTH, SPIDER-SLEUTH, SLEUTHING WHATEVER A... ♪

...SPIDER...

...CAN...

IF A CHILDHOOD OF *ENCYCLOPEDIA BROWN* BOOKS AND BAD SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS HAS TAUGHT ME *ANYTHING*...

...IT'S THAT THE PEOPLE MOST LIKELY TO BENEFIT FROM STOLEN *MURDER WEAPONS* ARE... *MURDERERS!*

MISSING

(IS IT ANY WONDER EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY GAVE ME A FULL SCHOLARSHIP?)

MISSING

KEEMIA ALVARADO

SO, TO START, I HAVE TO INVESTIGATE EACH KILLING *MYSELF*...

...IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER, SINCE I DON'T HAVE ANY *BETTER* IDEAS...

...SO ALMA ALVARADO...

...YOU'RE FIRST U--

WHOA.

OKAY...THEY JUST DID A SEGMENT ON PEOPLE LIKE THIS ON 60 MINUTES...

"BAD GUY GROUPIES"... OBSESSIVELY WRITING TO THE COSTUMED INCARCERATED...

ALMA'S GOT SOME REAL WINNERS AMONG HER PEN PALS...

TRAPSTER? C'MON. ALMA, I NEVER GOT THE CHANCE TO MEET YOU...

...BUT, GIRL, YOU COULDA DONE BETTER...

AH.

YOU! GET OUTTA HERE! NOW!

YOWZA!

BWOOM

TWHAP

YOU PUNKS HAVE TAKEN ALL YOU'RE *GONNA* TAKE FROM ME!

LADY--BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU *POINT* THAT THING!

THE KICKBACK *ALONE* COULD PUT YOU THROUGH THE *WALL!*

I'M A *FRIEND*--CAN'T YOU TELL BY MY BIG, EXPRESSIVE *EYES?*

I WANT TO FIND OUT WHO KILLED ALMA!

OOHH... POOR *ALMA*... SHE'S WITH HER *PARENTS* NOW, THAT POOR, CONFUSED SOUL...

IT'S MY GREAT-GRANDCHILD *KEEMIA* I GOT TO WORRY ABOUT *NOW*--ALMA'S DAUGHTER! SHE MAY STILL BE AMONG THE LIVING--BUT *WHERE*, GOD ONLY KNOWS!

SHE BEEN GONE A WEEK-- BUT THE POLICE ARE *NO HELP!* THEY'RE TRYING TO FIND ALL THOSE *YUPPIES* WHO WENT MISSING WHEN THE D.B. GOT ATTACKED!

WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

"ONLY FROM THE *WITNESSES*...BUT THEY'RE *FOUR* AND *SIX!* THE DELGADO KIDS FROM THE TWELFTH FLOOR.

"I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET THEM GO OUT PLAYING BY *THEMSELVES*... I *KNOW* THAT!

"BUT I FIGURED, THERE'S *THREE* OF THEM! WHAT COULD BE THE HARM?

"THE DELGADO KIDS, THEY SAID...WELL...

PRINCESS KEEMIA.

DID YOU...DID YOU JUST SAY...

..."PRINCESS"?

OF COURSE, YOUR MAJESTY.

I HAVE COME TO TAKE YOU TO YOUR *TRUE* FATHER.

AND YOUR SECRET *KINGDOM*.

"...THEY SAID THEIR SNOWMAN *CAME TO LIFE* AND KEEMIA WALKED *AWAY* WITH IT."

AND KEEMIA'S FATHER... IS HE...?

HE'S A *BLANK LINE* ON A BIRTH CERTIFICATE, THAT'S WHO HE IS!

MISSING

ALMA HAD THIS THING FOR *JAILBIRDS*, THOUGHT IT GAVE HER A MORE *EXCITING* LIFE, I GUESS!

ONE WAS GIVIN' HER A *HARD TIME* RECENTLY, I KNOW THAT MUCH! SHE WENT TO A LAWYER TO GET A *RESTRAINING ORDER*, KEEP HIM AWAY FROM HER AN' KEEMIA!

THIS LAWYER... YOU WOULDN'T KNOW IF HIS NAME WAS *HERMAN COHEN*, PERCHANCE?

THAT *SOUNDS* RIGHT...

BINGO.

SO I FOUND A CONNECTION BETWEEN *TWO* OF THE KILLINGS...

...LET'S SEE IF WE CAN MAKE IT *THREE-FOR-THREE!*

WELL, WELL, WELL.

TO WHAT DO I OWE THE PLEASURE?

A RECENTLY WHACKED CONCERT PROMOTER NAMED DESHAWN PRICE...WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT HIM, BETTY?

WHY COME TO A LI'L OL' EX-*D.B.* REPORTER LIKE *ME?*

RUMOR HAS IT YOU USE *FRONT LINE* FOR ALL YOUR *"INSIDE JOURNALISM"* NEEDS THESE DAYS...

WELL... GIVEN THE *SUBJECT MATTER...*

RIGHT. THE D.B. IS...WAS... MORE LOCKED-IN TO THE *CELEBRITY* SET...

...WITH SUCH CLASSIC FRONT-PAGE HEADLINES AS *"SOAP STAR DISCOVERED IN LOVE NEST WITH GOAT AND MIDGETS".*

SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

...ALTHOUGH I BELIEVE THEY PREFER TO BE CALLED "LITTLE PEOPLE."

TOUCHÉ.

DESHAWN PRICE? YEAH...I THOUGHT THE NAME SOUNDED FAMILIAR...

HE WAS NEGOTIATING WITH THE MAYOR'S OFFICE TO SET UP A WINTER CONCERT SERIES ON *GOVERNORS ISLAND...*

...HELP THE CITY GENERATE SOME OFF-SEASON REVENUE.

BUGLE GIRL

BUT PRICE'S DEATH PROBABLY PUTS THE *KIBOSH* ON--

SPIDER-MAN?

I'M OVER HERE.

AAAAAAHH!!

SORRY. WHAT'S THAT ON YOUR SCREEN? "BUGLEGIRL?"

YEAH... IT'S THIS *BLOG* I'M THINKING ABOUT STARTING UP.

I'M NEGOTIATING EXCLUSIVE ACCESS TO THE D.B.'S ONLINE ARCHIVE WITH BENNETT'S LAWYERS.

EVER SINCE DEXTER TRIED TO MAKE ME DO THAT *HATCHET JOB* ON *MARTIN LI* I'VE WANTED TO STRIKE OUT ON MY OWN...

PRESS

IN DARK REIGN: MR. NEGATIVE--PLUG VAN LENTE

GOOD LUCK, BUT NOT SURE A BLOGGER WILL GET THE SAME *ACCESS* A REGULAR REPORTER WOULD!

OH, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT *ME*...

...I'VE GOT SOME INSIDE ACCESS OF MY *OWN*...

ZZZZZ CAN'T *BELIEVE*... COUNCILWOMAN PEREZ...

GONNA TRY AND BLOCK CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW OVERPASS?

SHE CAN'T RISK A *PRIMARY* FIGHT...

ZZZZZ ...BUT JONAH MIGHT JUST HAVE TO THROW HIS WEIGHT BEHIND *NIEVE*... SKNZZZ...

GOVERNORS ISLAND IS ONE OF THE BIGGER LANDMASSES IN NEW YORK HARBOR...

...IT WAS THE MAIN *ARMY BASE* IN THE BIG APPLE FOR OVER A CENTURY, BEFORE THE *COAST GUARD* TOOK IT OVER...

...BUT *THEY* ABANDONED IT, TOO. THE PARK SERVICE HAS BEEN RUNNING IT AS A LANDMARK SITE.

SINCE THIS IS THE *OFF-SEASON*, IT SHOULD BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC, THOUGH.

THAT WOULD MAKE IT THE IDEAL PLACE TO STASH A *KIDNAPPED GIRL*, I GUESS.

IT'S NOT LIKE MY CUP OVERFLOWETH WITH *LEADS*, HERE...

THIS PLACE IS A *MAZE* OF ABANDONED BARRACKS, FORTS, AND OTHER MILITARY BUILDINGS.

DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN *LOOKING...*

...BUT METHINKS SPIDEY BE ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

"FRIENDS, ROMANS, ICICLES, LEND ME YOUR EARS..."

SOMEBODY'S BEEN BUSY.

COULD IT BE *YOU?*

GEEZ, IT'S LIKE AN ENTIRE EMPTY CITY HERE...

LIBRARY

...THEY GOT A LIBRARY, A BOWLING ALLEY, A MOVIE THEATER...

...IS THAT A BURGER KING OVER THERE?

OKAY, MARKO.

YOU LED ME WHERE YOU WANTED ME TO GO.

TIME TO COME OUT NOW.

CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR, WALL-CRAWLER.

THIS CASTLE USED TO BE A MILITARY *PRISON.*

CHECK OUT THE BIG BRAIN ON *FLINT!*

AND I SENTENCE YOU TO *LIFE!*

SINCE WHEN ARE YOU A *HISTORY* BUFF?

QURRAAM

ARGH!

THUK

SKRRAAASK

SINCE I *CLAIMED* THIS ISLAND--

--IN THE NAME OF THE *SANDMAN!*

SO THAT'S WHY YOU GOT RID OF THE *PROMOTER*, TO KEEP THE ISLAND ALL TO *YOURSELF*--

HUH?

--THOUGH GIVEN YOUR WEAKNESS TO *WATER*, I WOULDN'T CALL CHOOSING AN *ISLAND HIDEOUT* YOUR *SWIFTEST* MOVE TO DATE--

--BUT ALL I CARE ABOUT IS THE *GIRL*, SANDY!

WHERE IS SHE? WHAT IS SHE TO *YOU*?

WHUUUMP

WHAT IS SHE TO *ME*?

WHAT *IS* SHE?

I'LL *TELL* YOU WHAT SHE IS!

ZWOK

SHE'S EVERYTHING!

THAT SO?

WHERE I COME FROM...

...MURDERING SOMEBODY'S MOM IS A STRANGE WAY OF SHOWING AFFECTION!

KLAK

WHAT? I DON'T KNOW WHAT KINDA B.S. CHARGES YOU'RE TRYING TO PIN ON ME, WEB-HEAD--

--BUT I DON'T WANT TO DO *NOTHIN'* TO *NOBODY!* EXCEPT BE *LEFT ALONE!*

ME AND *KEEMIA* DON'T NEED ANYBODY BUT *EACH OTHER!*

THOUGHT THAT MIGHT BE YOUR ATTITUDE...

AGAIN WITH THE WEBBING? WHY DO YOU EVEN *BOTHER?*

YOU *KNOW* I CAN JUST PASS THROUGH THE STRANDS LIKE--

EEEEEYYUAAAAGHH!!

FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH...I'M NOT TOO *PROUD* OF THIS, SANDY.

BUT THOSE *GRAINS* IN THE POLICE LAB...THE FACT YOU WERE ONE OF ALMA'S *PEN PALS*...

...I SUSPECTED *YOU* ALL ALONG. AND SINCE YOU'VE GRADUATED FROM *FREAKSHOW BANK ROBBER* TO COLD-BLOODED *KILLER*...

...I DECIDED IT WAS *NO MORE MR. NICE SPIDEY.*

I COOKED UP SOME WEB-FLUID LACED WITH *HYDROFLUORIC ACID.*

IT'S DISSOLVING YOUR INDIVIDUAL GRANULES.

I DON'T THINK IT WILL KILL YOU. I DON'T THINK *ANYTHING* CAN KILL YOU.

BUT IT *WILL* KEEP YOU OUT OF MY *HAIR* LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO FIND *KEEMIA.*

THEN...I'LL FIND SOME WAY TO *RESTORE* YOU. I *PROMISE.*

HA! ALWAYS KNEW I DESERVED THAT SCHOLARSHIP.

AWWWWW.

WE DIDN'T KNOW YOU *CARED.*

BUT AS YOU CAN

SEE WE'VE LEARNED SOME

NEW TRICKS

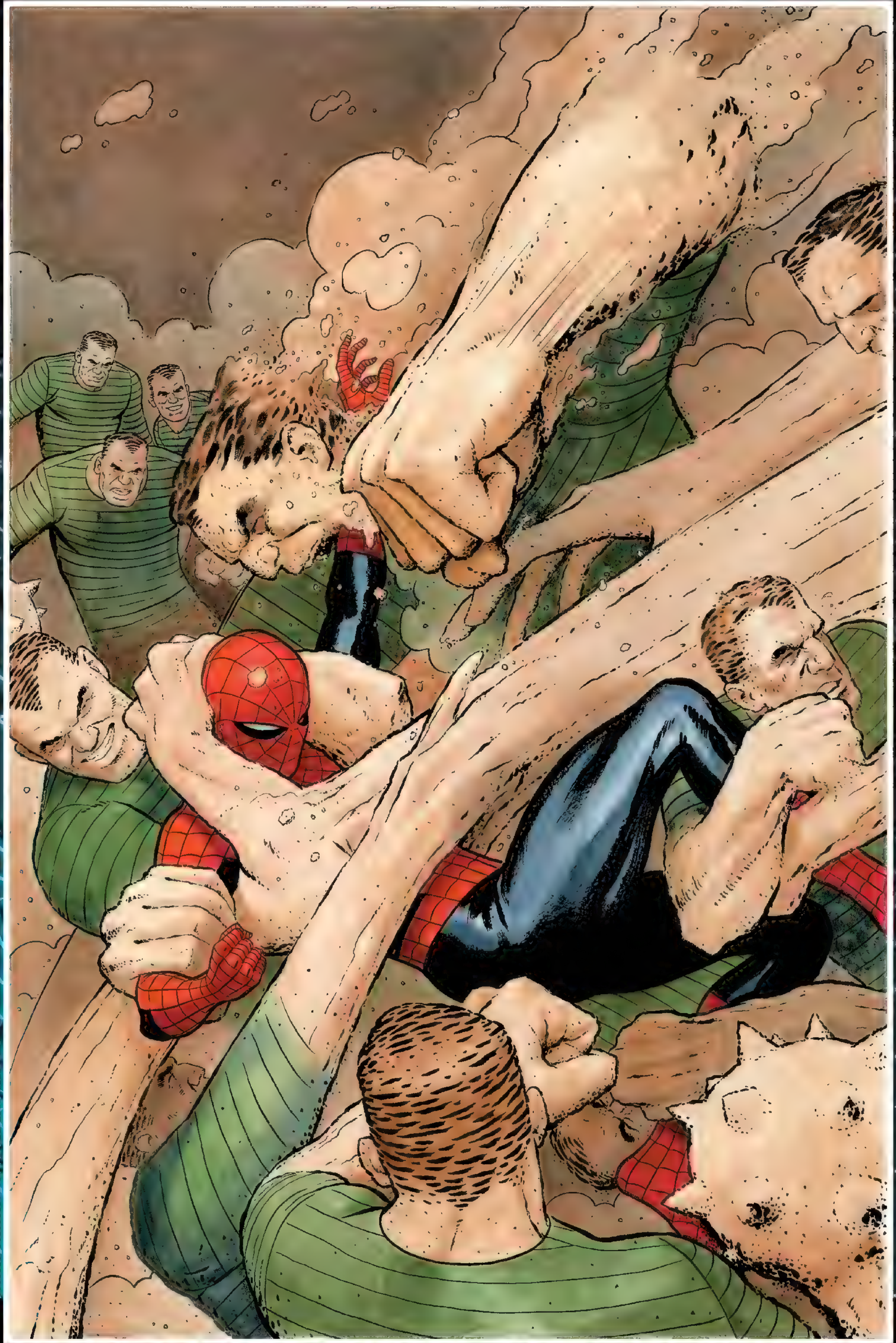
SINCE THE LAST TIME WE MET!

YES. CLEARLY.

ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE I'D BETTER SEND THAT SCHOLARSHIP MONEY BACK.

To Be Continued!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #612 VARIANT
BY ADI GRANOV



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #616

TAKE IT FROM ME, IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF ABOUT TO TAKE A SERIOUS *BEATING*...

AVOID IT IF YOU CAN.

BUT IF YOU *CAN'T*...

...HERE'S A *SECRET*.

ONCE YOU'VE DECIDED YOU'RE GOING TO *TAKE* IT, IT'S NOT SO BAD.

JUST GO TO A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN'T BE *HURT*.

CATCH *IS*, EVENTUALLY...

...YOU'RE GONNA HAVE TO COME BACK *OUT* AGAIN.

GROAN...

...KEEMIA ALVARADO, I PRESUME?

TELL ME YOU'RE NOT JUST A PAIN-INDUCED HALLUCINATION...

...AND THAT YOU HAVE SOME *EXCEDRIN*...

MY NAME IS KEEMIA *MARKO!*

PRINCESS MARKO, MISTER MAN! YOU'RE *TRESPASSING* IN MY *KINGDOM!*

OKAY...

IS *FLINT* MARKO-- *SANDMAN*--LURKING AROUND HERE ANYWHERE?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

HE'S ALL *AROUND* US.

Ferry

NYPD

NYC POLICE

SSSSHH!! DADDY'S *SLEEPING!*

WHAT... WE'RE *INSIDE--*

HE'S HAD A *HARD DAY* AT *WORK!*

YEAH, I WAS ON THE *RECEIVING END.*

LISTEN, KID, YOUR *GRANDMOTHER'S* WORRIED SICK ABOUT YOU--

YOU KNOW ABUELA?

SURE! WE GO *WAY* BACK!

SIX HOURS, EVEN!

C'MON, I'LL TAKE YOU TO HER, SHE CAN TELL YOU HERSELF!

NO! I'M NOT *GOING!*

I CAN'T LEAVE MY *KINGDOM!*

DADDY SAYS I GOT *'SPONSIBILTIES!* HE'S THE KING!

AND SOON HE'LL BRING MOMMY *AND* ABUELA HERE TO LIVE WITH US FOREVER!

SHE MUST NOT *KNOW*... SANDMAN *KILLED* HER MOTHER, AND HER MOTHER'S LAWYER...*AND* A CONCERT PROMOTER, TO KEEP HIS HIDEAWAY *HIDDEN*...

...ALTHOUGH YOU'D THINK EVENTUALLY SOMEBODY IS GONNA NOTICE AN *EXTRA BUILDING* APPEARING OUT OF NOWHERE, EVEN ON AN *ABANDONED* ISLAND...

RIGHT, RIGHT. THAT'S WHAT I MEANT.

YOU LET ME DOWN, AND I'LL GO *GET* ABUELA, BRING HER *DOWN* HERE, SO SHE CAN STRAIGHTEN ALL THIS OUT.

BUT...DADDY SAYS...YOU WORK FOR THE *LAW*... YOU WANT TO KEEP ME AND HIM *APART*...

JUST LIKE *MOMMY* WANTED TO...

NO, NO, NO.

YOUR POPS AND I ARE *OLD PALS.*

WHY, WHEN I THINK OF ALL THE *FUN* WE'VE HAD OVER THE YEARS...

...I GRIN FROM *EAR TO EAR* BENEATH THIS MASK! SERIOUSLY!

YOU *WON'T* GRAB ME AND TRY AND BRING ME BACK?

WHAT? *ME?* NO. NEVER!

PROMISE? I'M A *SUPER HERO!*

WE NEVER *LIE!*

HE SAID NOT TO TRUST ANYTHING YOU SAY--

YOU *SEE?* THAT *FLINT!* ALWAYS WITH THE *JOSHING!*

I'LL BRING ABUELA RIGHT BACK HERE. HE WON'T EVEN KNOW I'M GONE!

YOU *PROMISE?*

...

ALL RIGHT...

DADDY'S ASLEEP, BUT HE CAN STILL HEAR ME...

LET MISTER MAN GO! PRINCESS MARKO COMMANDS IT!

THOUGH I *PERSONALLY* WOULDN'T TURN MY BACK ON TODAY'S GRITTIER, DARKER, MORE *MORALLY AMBIGUOUS* "SUPER HEROES" FOR *FIVE SECONDS*...

EEEEEEE!! LEGGO!! DADDY!!

SH WHAAAAMM

DADDY DADDY! HELP!

THOOOOOM

MARKO MUST BE STILL ASLEEP--REACTING *UNCONSCIOUSLY* TO KEEMIA'S SCREAMS!

BBBBZZZZZZZ

BRRRRLLLLLL

HEY! *TONE IT DOWN* SOME, HUH, SANDY?

YOU WOULDN'T WANNA HURT YOUR QUOTE-UNQUOTE "DAUGHTER," WOULD YOU?

THIS JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER AND BETTER.

NO...

I HATE HATE HATE **HATE** YOU!!!

THANKS FOR YOUR INPUT.

...YOU *WOULDN'T* LET HER BE HURT, WOULD YOU?

LET'S *TEST* THAT!

BLOORRR

UUFFF!

WHUD

SPIDER MAN

I SAID I DON'T WANNA--

TRUST ME, YOU'LL THANK ME WHEN YOU'RE *OLDER.*

OR DON'T. SEE IF I CARE.

SPIDER-

MAN BRING

KEEMIA BACK

TO

ME!

THE CROWD SCENE IS KIND OF *NEW* FOR YOU, ISN'T IT, SANDY?

EVERY PARENT WISHES

THERE WAS

MORE THAN *ONE*

OF THEM

LEGGO LEGGO LEGGO LEGGO LEGGO

QUIT IT QUIT IT QUIT IT QUIT IT QUIT IT

AND SINCE I

HAVE TOTAL *MENTAL* CONTROL

OVER MY OWN *MOLECULES*

I CAN MAKE THAT

WISH COME

TRUE!

AND WHICH PAGE OF DR. SPOCK'S MANUAL TOLD YOU TO *MURDER* KEEMIA'S *MOM*, HUH?

AGAIN WITH THE *MURDER* RAP!

THAT UNGRATEFUL SHREW *ALMA* IS STILL *ALIVE*, NOT THAT SHE *DESERVES* TO B--

IT WAS *ME!*

HANH?

WHY *DENY* IT? WE'RE *PROUD* WE DID IT!

SHE SAID WE WAS STARTIN' TO *FRIGHTEN* HER! THAT WE COULDN'T SEE *KEEMIA* NO MORE! AN' SHE GOT A *RESTRAINING ORDER* AGAINST US!

I GAVE HER SOMETHIN' TO BE FRIGHTENED ABOUT! SHORTY DID IN HER LYING *LAWYER--*

--AND THE *GENTLEMAN* TOOK OUT THAT CONCERT PROMOTER WHO WAS GONNA HAVE THIS ISLAND CRAWLIN' WITH KIDS!

INDUBITABLY.

BUT...I DON'T REMEMBER DOIN' *ANY* OF THAT...

YOU MUST NOT BE ABLE TO SPLIT YOUR *MIND* AS EASILY AS YOUR BODY, SANDY!

YOUR *SUBCONSCIOUS* IS CONTROLLING SOME OF YOUR BODIES-- ACTING OUT *REPRESSED URGES* WITHOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

YOU THINK THIS IS A *SAFE ENVIRONMENT* FOR A *KID?* WHAT IF SOME ASPECT OF YOUR PERSONALITY STARTS TO *RESENT* KEEMIA?

LET ME TAKE HER TO HER *GRAND-MOTHER*, WHERE--

NO! SHE'S ON *ALMA'S* SIDE!

SLICE HIM TO *RIBBONS!* FEED HIM TO THE *FISH!* THEN WE *CAN--*

NO! NO KILLING IN FRONT

OF KEEMIA SHE'S GOTTA

SEE HER DADDY IS

CAN'T LET SPIDER-MAN TAKE HER

A GOOD GUY AT HEART AND HE'S

WANTED TO KILL THE BUG FOR YEARS

GONNA GO STRAIGHT FOR HER SAKE

CLEARLY YOU ALL HAVE SOME ISSUES TO WORK OUT AMONGST YOURSELVES!

I'LL JUST LEAVE YOU TO IT!

WAIT-- WE CAN

AGREE WE CAN'T

LET HIM GET

AWAY WITH HER

RIGHT?

RIGHT.

PHOOEY.

GREAT...NO *BOATS* ARE DOCKED HERE IN THE OFF-SEASON. HOW AM I GONNA GET OFF SANDMAN ISLAND?

COME TO THINK OF IT...HOW IS *HE* GONNA GET OFF? WATER ISN'T EXACTLY HIS *FRIEND.*

THE HECK IS *THAT?*

THAT'S WHERE DADDY GETS OUR *FOOD* AND NEW TOYS!

YOU STAY *AWAY,* MISTER MAN!

HMM...

WHA

NG

LIKE I GOT ANY *BETTER* IDEAS.

OOOKAY...GIANT *VENTILATION FANS...* SOME BLOWING *IN,* SOME BLOWING *OUT...*

WHAT IS--

SPIDER-MAN!

WHOOP!

SNAP SNAP

WON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU!

YOU GOT A FUNNY WAY OF SHOWING IT!

WHY CAN'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME AND MY DAUGHTER ALONE?

WELL... FOR ONE THING, NOW THAT SHE'S OUT OF EARSHOT...

...WE *BOTH* KNOW KEEMIA ISN'T *REALLY* YOUR DAUGHTER!

YOU'RE LACKING SOME *ESSENTIAL PARTS* FOR BABY-MAKING!

SO? I'M THE ONLY GUY WHO EVER *TREATED* KEEMIA LIKE A FATHER!

EVEN WHEN I WAS IN RIKER'S I SENT HER GIFTS! I SENT HER LETTERS!

THEN, ONE DAY, WHILE I WAS VISITING, JUST ON HER *OWN*--

SKREEECH

--KEEMIA STARTED CALLING ME "*DADDY!*"

YOU KNOW WHAT THAT *MEANS* TO A FREAK LIKE *ME*, WHO'S NEVER HAD ANYTHING *PERMANENT* IN HIS LIFE?

EVERYTHING ALWAYS *SLIPS THROUGH MY FINGERS*--

--LIKE *YOU-KNOW-WHAT!*

YOU TRY AND TAKE THIS *AWAY* FROM ME, AND I'LL *NEVER* FORGIVE YOU, WALL-CRAWLER!

YOU HEAR ME?!? NEVER!!

BETTER *THAT*...

...THAN RISK A LITTLE GIRL'S *LIFE* ON A *LIE*.

WHUMP

LIE?

YOU THINK I'M GONNA *SIT HERE* AND BE LECTURED ON *HONESTY*--

--BY A GUY WEARING A MASK?!

NGGGG--

USED ALL MY "ACID WEBBING" UP IN OUR FIRST FIGHT!

THIS IS MY ONLY SHOT--

KEEMIA! LOOK AWAY, BABY!

I DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE THIS--

UNNNNHH!!

--I GOTTA MAKE IT COUNT!

WHOMP

WHOOMP

NO

KIEF

DADDY--!

EEEEEEEEEEEE--

EEE--

IT'S OKAY, KID! I GOT YOU.

THE *BROOKLYN/ BATTERY TUNNEL...* OF COURSE.

UP THERE ON GOVERNORS ISLAND IS THE *VENTILATION TOWER* FOR IT.

DADDY... SNIFF

THAT ACCESS HATCH MUST BE HOW SANDY WAS GETTING TO AND FROM THE MAINLAND WHILE AVOIDING WATER.

YOU'RE *SAFE* NOW. IT'S *OVER.*

City Hall.

AND THE COPS ON DUTY HERE STILL THINK YOU'RE A HERO FOR AVERTING THAT *TERRORIST STRIKE* AT SHADOW COMMAND.

MY ROOMIE DID THE RIGHT THING IN TELLING ME ABOUT THIS...

GO ON, KEEMIA. GO WITH GLORY. SHE'S A *FRIEND.*

WHEN I CALLED BETTY TO HAVE HER PICK UP KEEMIA'S GRANDMOTHER, THIS WASN'T EXACTLY WHAT I HAD IN MIND.

WHAT'S THE *MAYOR* GOING TO SAY IF HE SEES HIS *PRESS SECRETARY* PALLING AROUND WITH MR. "*THREAT-OR-MENACE*" HIMSELF?

DON'T WORRY, JONAH'S IN D.C. UNTIL TOMORROW.

...AND I'M AFRAID *I* HAD TO TELL *THEM.*

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES. THE GIRL'S IN OUR HANDS NOW.

WHY? WHAT ABOUT HER *GRANDMOTHER--?*

SHE TOLD THE POLICE SHE LEFT KEEMIA OUTSIDE SO SHE COULD WATCH *TV.* SHE CLEARLY ISN'T *FIT.* AND SINCE THE MOTHER IS *DECEASED* AND THE FATHER CAN'T BE *FOUND...*

...THE GIRL IS GOING INTO THE *SYSTEM.*

WHAT?! NO!! YOU SAID YOU WERE GONNA SAVE ME! YOU SAID I COULD SEE ABUELA!!

YOU LIED! WHY DID YOU TAKE ME *AWAY* FROM DADDY FOR *THIS,* MISTER MAN?

WHAT KINDA *HERO* ARE *YOU?*

I'M SORRY, SPIDER-MAN. I AM. BUT...

...WHAT DID YOU *THINK* WAS GOING TO HAPPEN?

COFFEE
SINCE 1962
PETER!
I DON'T KNOW *HOW* YOU DID IT, BUT YOU *DID* IT!
THANK YOU!
DEPARTMENT GAVE YOU YOUR *JOB* BACK, HUH, CARLIE?
THE GIRL'S STORY WAS *WILD*--BUT IT MATCHED THE *PHYSICAL EVIDENCE* AND *EXONERATED* ME!
"THE THEORY IS THAT THE *'WEAPONS'* COLLECTED AT OUR MURDER SCENES WERE ACTUALLY *PART* OF SANDMAN.
"AT SOME POINT, HE MUST HAVE UNCONSCIOUSLY *SUMMONED* THEM BACK TO THE REST OF HIS BODY--
"--AND SO THEY *LITERALLY* WALKED OUT OF THE LAB WHEN I WASN'T LOOKING!"
YOU...OKAY, PETE?
YOU *LOOK* LIKE I *FELT* UNTIL I GOT THE GOOD NEWS FROM THE UNION...
OH... I'M FINE. I GUESS.
I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT THE GIRL, KEEMIA, GOING INTO FOSTER CARE.
YOU EVER FEEL LIKE...YOU *TRY* TO DO *GOOD*... BUT YOU JUST END UP MAKING THINGS *WORSE?*
THAT MAYBE THE WORLD WOULD BE *BETTER OFF* IF YOU JUST LEFT WELL ENOUGH *ALONE?*
MY *DAD* WAS A COP. HE USED TO SAY...
...THAT'S WHAT *REALLY* BEING A *HERO* IS LIKE.
MAKING THE *HARD CHOICE.*
WITH NOBODY BUT *YOU* TO SAY YOU WERE *RIGHT.*

HERE WE ARE, KIMA!

KEEMIA.

YOUR *NEW HOME.*

THE *BRIGGS* ARE ONE OF OUR BEST FOSTER FAMILIES...

...AND CERTAINLY ONE OF OUR MOST *PROLIFIC!*

I'M SURE YOUR NEW FOSTER BROTHERS AND SISTERS WILL SHOW YOU WHERE TO PUT YOUR THINGS.

YOU GOT ANY *MONEY?*

NO...

THEN WHAT *GOOD* ARE YOU?

MY NAME IS *KEEMIA.*

THAT MEANS "ALCHEMY." IN PERSIAN.

BAD MEN *STOLE* ME FROM MY KINGDOM.

THEY DROPPED ME IN WITH THE *COMMON PEOPLE.*

BUT I KNOW BETTER.

I AM A PRINCESS.

AND MY FATHER THE KING IS OUT THERE. SOMEWHERE.

HE'S WAITING FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT TO COME BACK... AND *RESCUE* ME.

ONE DAY. HE'LL *FIND* ME.

AND EVERYTHING WILL BE BEAUTIFUL AGAIN.

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN IN KEEMIA'S CASTLE

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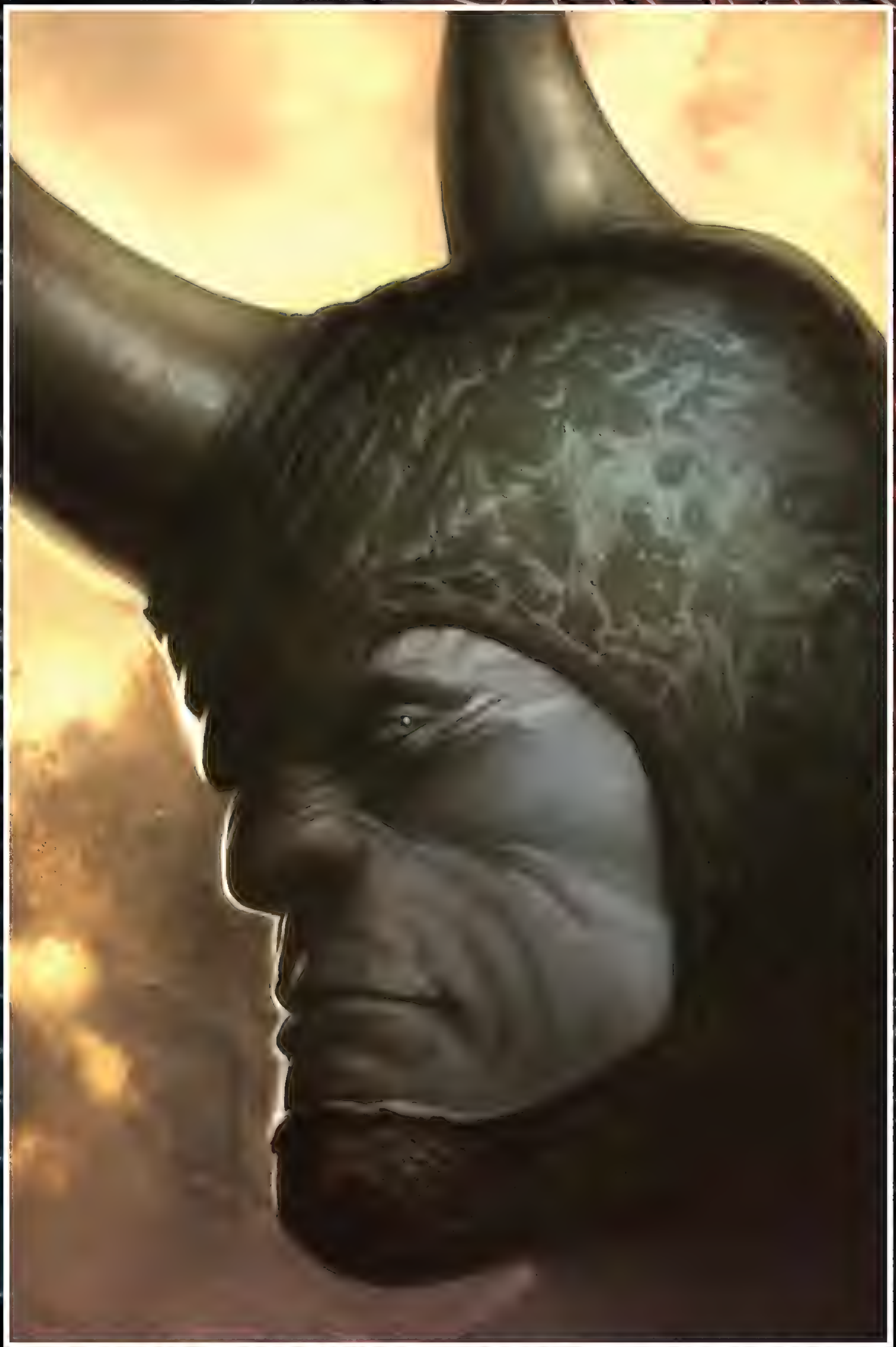


WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #3 — “GAUNTLET ORIGINS: RHINO”

GAUNTLET: ORIGINS

RHINO

Then:

LOOK AT THIS PLACE

RUDRIGO

DICTATOR'S A CROOK

REBELS ARE CROOKS

THE PEOPLE...

...THEY'RE GETTING IT FROM BOTH DIRECTIONS.

THOOM THOOM TH

CLICK

CAN'T SAY I GOT A LOT OF SYMPATHY FOR 'EM. THOUGH.

THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM

I MEAN, IF THEY'RE SO SMART...

BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA

...HOW'D THEY LET THEMSELVES GET *BORN* INTO A DUMP LIKE THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE?

AND THEY SAY I'M DUMB

WABAAM

BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA

KHOOM

THO

KHOOM

THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM

BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA

KRRR

KRRRAMMMBBBBLLLLL

SÍ...

EXCELENTE...

POOR SCHMUCKS

NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT, THOUGH.

JUST BUSINESS

SAW A MOVIE ONCE.

I WAS JUST A SQUIRT

GAVE ME WORDS TO LIVE BY

"FIRST YOU GET THE MONEY.

"THEN YOU GET THE POWER.

"THEN YOU GET THE WOMEN."

LTON ST

BUT I GOT STUCK ON THE MONEY PART.

THIS GUY I DID COLLECTIONS FOR PUT ME IN TOUCH WITH THESE DEFECTORS HE KNEW.

WE USED TO DEVELOP WEAPONS FOR THE *KREMLIN* FOR *PEANUTS*, LIKE *SUCKERS!*

BUT NOW WE'VE GONE INTO BUSINESS FOR *OURSELVES*--AND BUSINESS IS *GOOD!*

Blah blah BULLETPROOF (big word) STOPS A 125MM *TANK SHELL*--

BUT THOSE blah blah OLD WOMEN AT THE blah blah blah WOULDN'T LET US ($10 phrase) ON *HUMANS*--

--BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU, THE yadda yadda yadda IS PERFECTLY SAFE!

UH-HUH.

OUR *BLAH* TESTS HAVE BEEN UTTERLY blah blah!

RIGHT.

OH, SURE. YOU GOTTA HAVE THAT.

WITHIN JUST A FEW *MONTHS* OF TREATMENT YOUR (S.A.T. word) WILL BE WELL BEYOND LEVELS OF blabbity blahblah.

OKAY, SO I HAD NO CLUE WHAT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT.

BUT A TEN GRAND SIGNING BONUS WAS ALL I NEEDED TO HEAR.

THE GEEKS WERE GETTING PAID TO BUTT IN IN SOME CIVIL WAR IN SOME COUNTRY I NEVER HEARD OF BEFORE.

SO THAT'S WHERE WE DID THE THING

HURT LIKE HELL

AND NOW I SMELL LIKE A CAR SEAT.

OTHER THAN THAT, IT'S PRETTY COOL.

THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM THOOM

I GOT THE POWER.

NEXT STOP: WOMEN.

IT'S DONE.

IS IT NOW? IS IT?

NO! YOU'RE DONE!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I *LEVELED* THE REBEL VILLAGE...

YES! WE KNOW!

BUT WE WORK FOR THE REBELS, YOU MORON!!

WHAT? I HIT THE POSITION ON THE MAP YOU SHOWED ME...

NO! YOU DIDN'T!

...AND IT HAD THE SYMBOL ON ITS FLAG YOU GAVE ME...

NO! IT DIDN'T!

OH, WAIT...YOU'RE RIGHT...

...I WAS LOOKING AT IT *UPSIDE-DOWN*...

YOU GOTTA ADMIT THEY LOOK A LOT ALIKE, THOUGH...

HONEST MISTAKE.

"HONEST"... YOU DESTROYED THEIR *MAIN FORWARD BASE!*

NOT ONLY ARE WE *NOT* GOING TO GET *PAID*, THE REBEL COMMANDER HAS PUT A *BOUNTY* ON OUR HEADS!

OUR ONLY HOPE IS TO CONVINCE HIM THIS WHOLE FIASCO WAS DUE ENTIRELY TO YOUR *TOTAL AND UTTER STUPIDITY!!*

HEY.

GEEK.

DON'T CALL ME STUPID.

WHAT? WHEN I ASKED YOU TO *SIGN* OUR RELEASE FORM, YOU PUT DOWN *"PISCES!"*

YOU ONCE TOLD US TO MEET YOU AT THE CORNER OF *"WALK"* AND *"DON'T WALK!"*

I CAUGHT YOU *STUDYING* FOR YOUR *BLOOD TEST!*

CALLING YOU *STUPID* WOULD BE AN *INSULT* TO *STUPIDITY!*

YOU'RE A COMPLETELY DIM IGNORANT VACUOUS IMBECILIC IDIOT BRAINDEAD CRETINOUS MORON!!

GA

WARNED YOU.

THOOM THOOM THOOM

HUCHUC

HUCHUCHUCH

I KNOCK INTO STUFF.

THOOM

IT FALLS DOWN.

CHI CHI CHI

¡ALTO! ALTO, POR EL AMOR DE DIOS!!

THOOM

SOMETIMES...

THOOM

...ENOUGH TIMES...

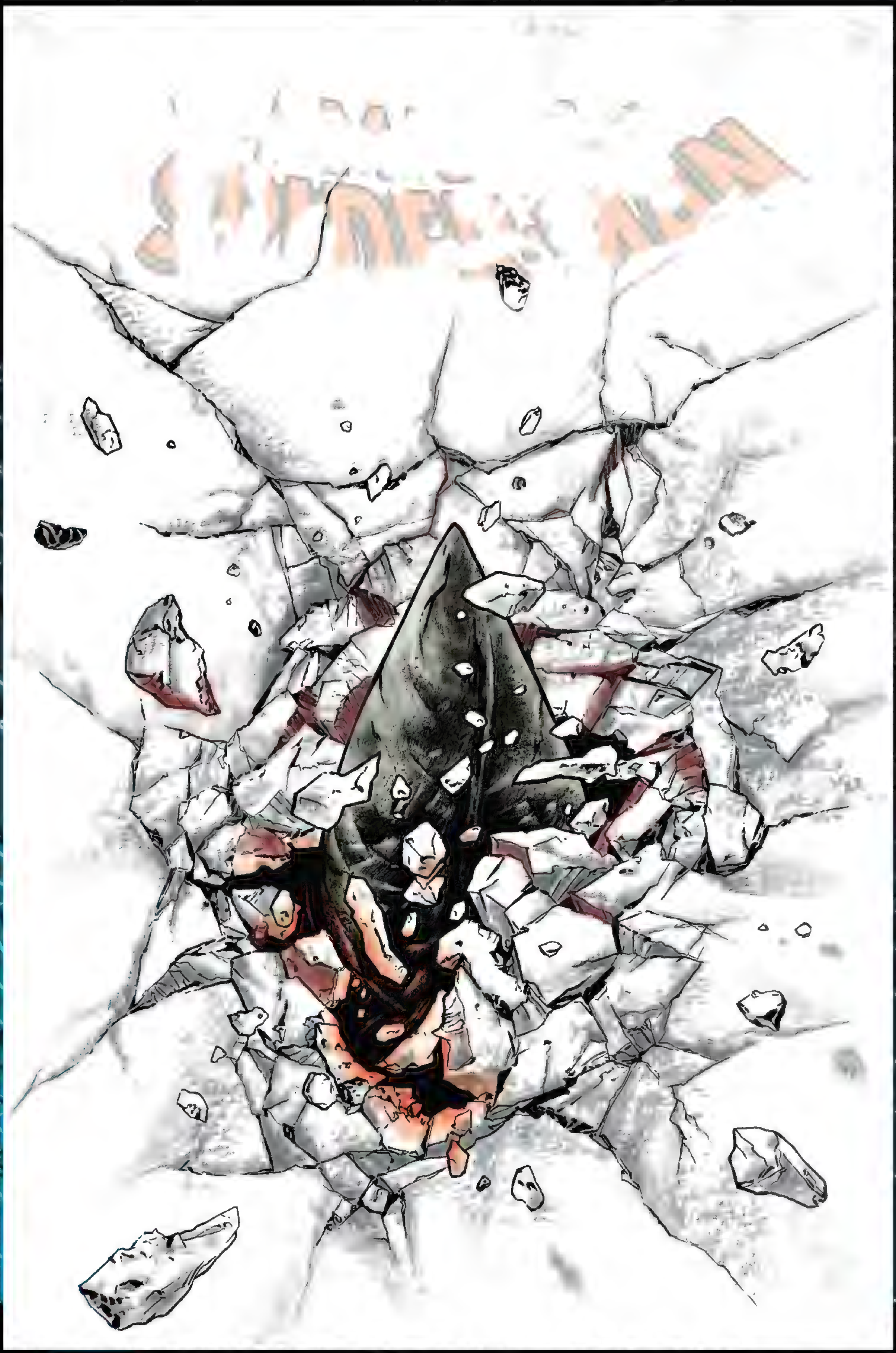
...I GET PAID FOR IT.

THOOM

LIFE IS GOOD

The Beginning....

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #617 SOMETHING'S COMING VARIANT
BY MAX FIUMARA



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #617 RHINO'S COMING VARIANT
BY MAX FIUMARA

Yonkers, N.Y.
TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES NORTH OF MIDTOWN MANHATTAN.
IT IS A SOLITARY CREATURE, IN GENERAL. SO MUCH SO THAT EVEN DURING MATING SEASON...
...RHINOS ARE MOST OFTEN ALONE, ONLY COUPLING FOR A FEW HOURS AT A TIME.
KGC
HEH.
NONSENSE.
WHAT'S NONSENSE?
NOTHING. SMELLS GOOD.
THANK YOU...I HAVE TO MAKE SURE YOU STAY BIG AND STRONG.
BIG AND FAT IS MORE LIKE IT.
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH FAT, ALEKSEI.
MORE TO LOVE.
OKSANA... YOU DID IT AGAIN.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
I'M A GROWN MAN--
AN OVERGROWN MAN. ACCORDING TO YOU.
I LIKE TO EAT MY FOOD. NOT PLAY WITH IT.
SO EAT. I WON'T CHARGE FOR THE EXTRA LOVE--
OKSANA--
STOP YOUR COMPLAINING AND EAT OR YOU'LL BE LATE FOR WORK.

HOW'S THAT WORKING FOR YA?

Miles Away From Yonkers.

WE ARE PLEASED.

SUBJECT EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS. I'VE SAID IT BEFORE...

...DAMN, I'M FANTASTIC.

MAYBE. DON'T COUNT YER EGG ROLLS BEFORE THEY HATCH, SISTER.

A RACIST GANGSTER. HOW ORIGINAL.

WHAT MY ASSOCIATE MEANS, DOCTOR TRAMMA, IS THAT THIS LITTLE DOG AND PONY IS INCONSEQUENTIAL.

WE NEED MORE PROOF...AGAINST HEAVY ORDNANCE.

BUT OF COURSE, GENTLEMEN. I STAND BEHIND MY WORK ONE HUNDRED PERCENT...

WOULD ANY OF YOU CARE TO STAND IN *FRONT* OF MY WORK, ARMED WITH THIS?

YOU KNOW, YOU COULD JUST PAY ME AND SAVE THE AMMO.

SIGH WHENEVER YOU'RE READY...

BRING IT, FORTUNE COOKIE.

FSSSSSSSSH

BLOOOM!

PFFFT! PUT THAT SKINNY PSYCHO OUT ON THE CURB!

SHE WASTED OUR MONEY *AND* TIME.

THUNT THUNT THUNT THUNT

???

I ACCEPT CASH, *CASH* AND--

KRAKKKK!!

--*CASH*. CONSIDER THE BRUTAL IMPALEMENT MY BONUS.

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE PRODUCT IS *READY*.

CORRECTION... *ALMOST* READY. SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO *FIRST*.

TEK TEK TEK

GAAAAAAAAAAH!

IT'S OKAY....I'M PETER PARKER. I'M IN MY APARTMENT. IT'S OKAY...

DREAM... JUST...JUST A DREAM.

ANOTHER ONE. SO WHY IS MY SPIDEY-SENSE TINGLING--

HANDS UP @%#$%!

WHOA WHOA WHOA!!

IT'S OKAY! MICHELE! WHOA!

"IT'S OKAY"--THEN WHY ARE YOU SCREAMING?!

WHY DO YOU HAVE A SHOTGUN?!?

FOR WHEN I HEAR SCREAMING!

THAT--! THAT'S NOT LOGICAL AT ALL.

VIN GAVE IT TO ME YEARS AGO WHEN I FIRST STARTED LIVING ALONE. NO OFFENSE, BUT YOU'RE MORE CHIHUAHUA THAN ROTTWEILER.

WOW. YOU MADE ME WET MYSELF AND INSULTED ME WITHIN 30 SECONDS. IMPRESSIVE.

YEAH, I'M A CATCH. SO WHAT WAS THE SCREAMING ABOUT? REFLECTING ON YOUR LIFE?

NIGHTMARE. I'VE BEEN HAVING THEM FOR ABOUT A WEEK NOW. IT'S WEIRD BECAUSE NOTHING REALLY HAPPENS IN THEM...

I'M, LIKE, IN A ZOO, OR THE JUNGLE...I DON'T KNOW...AND THERE'S A *LION*. CHEWING ON SOMETHING... BLOODY.

AND HE'S JUST LOOKING AT ME. LOOKING AT ME LIKE *"YOU'RE NEXT."*

MY ADVICE? STOP WATCHING NATURE SHOWS BEFORE BED.

THANK YOU, SIGMUND FIREARMS.

MY PLEASURE. AND SINCE WE'RE BEING CIVIL AND YOU'RE STILL GROGGY... WHAT ARE YOU DOING FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE?

SINCE YOU'RE HOLDING A GUN, I REALLY WANT TO ANSWER THIS CORRECTLY--

I NEED THE APARTMENT UNTIL ABOUT ONE AM. I HAVE SOMEONE COMING OVER.

"SOMEONE" LIKE...YOU HAVE A DATE?

DON'T YOU? IT'S THREE DAYS AWAY.

I...I HAVEN'T REALLY THOUGHT ABOUT IT. WHO--?

YOU DON'T GET TO CARE, UNLESS...YOU'RE MAKING ME A BETTER OFFER.

MICHELE. I...

DONE DEAL. AFTER THE BALL DROPS, COUNT TO AN *HOUR* BEFORE YOU COME HOME...

...OR I ACCIDENTALLY *WILL* SHOOT YOU.

YOU CAN SAVE YOUR AMMO, ROOMIE. PLACE IS YOURS.

BY THE WAY, REMEMBER WHEN YOU ASKED ME TO WAKE YOU UP AT NOON?

YEAH.

I FORGOT.

OH HELL.

I AM A COMPLETE SENTIMENTALIST AT NEW YEAR'S. I ADMIT IT. I GET ALL CHOKED UP REFLECTING ON THE SUCCESSES OF THE PAST, LOOKING TOWARDS THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE...IN THEORY.

MOST YEARS IT'S MORE LIKE *"BEATING MYSELF UP OVER TWELVE MONTHS OF CONSECUTIVE FAILURE AND CRIPPLING TERROR AT WHAT THE NEXT TWELVE HAVE IN STORE."*

EITHER WAY, GETS ME ALL MISTY.

THIS YEAR...I DON'T KNOW. THE JURY'S STILL OUT...THOUGH THE FREEZING RAIN GATHERING IN MY NETHER REGIONS, LACK OF A DATE FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE, AND STRING OF FOREBODING NIGHTMARES ARE STARTING TO GIVE ME HINT WHICH WAY IT'S ALL GOING.

MAYBE I'LL PUT A CALL IN TO DICK CLARK AND SEE IF HE'LL CANCEL THE WHOLE THING AND JUST SKIP RIGHT TO JANUARY SECOND.

RAGE OF THE RHINO

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GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

The Offices Of Front Line.

I'M GOING TO CUT RIGHT TO IT, PETE.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE GUY WHO'S BURNING FIFTEEN CANDLES AT ALL ENDS...

...BUT I SEE IT IN YOUR EYES, THE SLUMP OF YOUR SHOULDERS. IT'S CATCHING UP WITH YOU.

YEAH, IT'S BEEN...A DIFFERENT SORT OF YEAR...

LIKE FOR EXAMPLE THE WHO'S WHO OF SUPER VILLAINS CRAWLING OUT OF THE WOODWORK LATELY...

I COULD PROBABLY USE A BREAK. NOT THAT I CAN AFFORD ONE.

UNLESS... SOMEONE WERE TO BUY YOU *AWAY* FROM YOUR OTHER COMMITMENTS.

I WANT YOU HERE FULL TIME, PETE. WHATEVER JONAH'S PAYING YOU I'LL UP IT TEN PERCENT. IT'S NOT MUCH, BUT--

REALLY? WOW. THANKS, BEN. BUT...CAN YOU AFFORD THAT?

IT'S A TIME-TESTED TRUISM, PETE..."*YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU GOT TILL IT'S GONE.*"

THE "DB!" MAY HAVE BEEN TURNED INTO A RAG, BUT IT WAS STILL AN INSTITUTION. A THING LIKE THAT DISAPPEARS, IT REMINDS FOLKS THAT THERE'S A REASON SOME OF US STILL SEE FIT TO PRINT NEWS ON ACTUAL PAPER.

SINCE WE COVER LOCAL AND NATIONAL, OUR REVENUE IS ACTUALLY GOING UP. WHICH MEANS MORE PAGE COUNT. WHICH MEANS MORE PHOTOS ARE NEEDED TO FILL SAID PAGES.

I'M HOPING THAT A STEADY GIG MIGHT TAKE SOME OF THE PRESSURE OFF OF YOU. SAVE YOU HOPPING AT JJJ'S EVERY BECK AND CALL.

IS IT RUDE TO SAY I HAVE TO THINK ABOUT IT? I DID MAKE A COMMITMENT AND... GOD HELP ME...

THE MAN IS... FAMILY.

TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED, BUT IF YOU WANT SOME FREE ADVICE?

IF YOU WANT TO LIVE A LIFE OF PURPOSE... DIRECTION...YOU HAVE TO MAKE CHOICES.

SOMETIMES THAT MEANS CLOSING THE DOOR ON ONE LIFE TO PURSUE THE ONE YOU'RE MEANT FOR...

PARKER'S A FULL-TIMER?!

YO! PAPER PEOPLES! YOUR ATTENTION!

THIS IS PETER, HE TAKES PICTURES AND JUNK--AND I CALL HIM! HE'S MY *PHOTO-MONKEY.*

NORAH, THAT'S FLATTERING, BUT--

MINE.

IT'S THE UNIVERSAL SIGN OF EXCLUSIVE OWNERSHIP.

IN THIRD GRADE!

OKAY, WHATEVER. YOU KNOW YOU WON'T WASH THAT CHEEK.

YOU OWN A JACKET THAT DOESN'T HAVE A TEAM LOGO ON IT?

WE'RE GOING OUT TONIGHT... ON A STORY.

"WHO GAVE YOU THIS NUMBER--?"

"BE STILL AND *LISTEN.* I AM ONLY GOING TO ASK THIS *ONCE.*

HAMM

GOBLIN

SPIDER-M

IDENTI

SPI

VULTURE

SPIDERMAN FIGHTS LIZARD

THE DB EXCLUSIVE!

WEB

RHIN

"HAVE YOU GONE THROUGH MONTHS OF TRAINING...*PAIN*...*WORSE*... JUST TO LINE THE POCKETS OF NON-BELIEVERS, FAT ON *SIN AND CORRUPTION?*"

"WHO IS THIS?"

"HAVE YOU PULLED YOURSELF FROM THE GUTTER TO BE A *PLAYTHING?* OR...

"...ARE YOU READY FOR A *TRUE* TRANSFORMATION? THE ONE YOU *DREAM* OF?"

"...

"YOU KNOW WHERE HE IS?"

PHOTO BY JOHN ROMITA

"YES."

"THE ONE I NEED TO...TO..."

"THE WORD YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS '*ASCEND.*'"

"TELL ME... PLEASE."

YONKERS RACEWAY
EMPIRE CITY

THIS IS YOUR BIG STORY, NORAH? I THOUGHT YOU WERE DONE WITH "*THE COMMUNITY PAGES*"?

SEE, THAT'S WHY YOU'RE A PHOTO MONKEY AND I'M A *JOURNALIST*.

YOU SEE A SIMPLE P.R. PLOY BY THE CASINO, TANTALIZING MEMBERS OF THE PRESS WITH A $100 CREDIT TO COME AND REVIEW THE NEW EXTENSION...

...*I* SEE AN OPPORTUNITY TO WRITE A SCATHING EXPOSÉ ABOUT GRAFT IN THE HALLS OF GOVERNMENT.

THE CASINO'S BEEN OPEN FOR A YEAR AND A HALF. IT HAS THREE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEES--

GRAFT HAS NO EXPIRATION DATE.

DID I MENTION THE $100 VOUCHER?

I KNOW THAT NORAH'S FULL OF IT. AND I'M PRETTY SURE SHE DOES TOO.

ARE YOU CRAZY?! IS THAT THE WHOLE HUNDRED?!?

OF COURSE!

WHY?

WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT, PETE? THE HUNDRED BUCKS THAT WASN'T OURS TO BEGIN WITH...?

OR THAT *FEELING*. THE ONE YOU'RE GETTING RIGHT NOW?

TRUTH IS SHE'S BEEN AFRAID TO HIT ANY REALLY SERIOUS REPORTING SINCE OSBORN THREATENED HER LIFE.

BUT SHE'S NOT THE EASIEST GIRL TO HAVE A "*HEART TO HEART*" WITH. I'LL HAVE TO BE GENTLE--

GUILTY. WORRIED ABOUT MONEY. A LITTLE NAUSEOUS...

I PRETTY MUCH FEEL LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME.

AND... WE HAVE A WINNER....

LUCKY 13, BLACK!

WHAT ABOUT *THAT* FEELING?

BETTER. NOW LET'S HIT THE PENNY SLOTS AND--

LET IT RIDE!

AND BACK TO NAUSEA.

Five Spins Later...

THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS. ALMOST *SIX MONTHS' RENT.* RIGHT THERE. IN FRONT OF YOU. *HOW?*

BECAUSE I DON'T CARE ABOUT IT? BECAUSE THE UNIVERSE LOVES RECKLESS ABANDON? BECAUSE I'M JUST PLAIN *LUCKY?*

HA! I'M USED TO THE EXACT *OPPOSITE* SORT OF "LUCK" WHEN I'M WITH MY OTHER *GIRLFRIEND.*

"OTHER" GIRLFRIEND?

WELL, I... YOU ARE A FRIEND WHO... IS A GIRL.

YOUR SLIP IS SHOWING, MR. PARKER. AND IT'S FREUDIAN. TELL ME MORE.

I--YOU-YOU'RE DATING RANDY ROBERTSON.

"DATING" NOT "MARRIED TO."

AND F.Y.I., HE'S AWAY UNTIL JANUARY FIFTH...WHICH LEAVES ME OPEN FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE IN CASE YOU'RE AS BAD AT MATH AS YOU ARE AT ASKING GIRLS OUT.

I-- YOU--

CRAZY. SHE'S CRAZY. AND I'M CRAZY FOR EVEN CONSIDERING--

SO CRAZY MY *SPIDEY-SENSE* IS...

OH HELL.

POP A TUMS AND MOVE IT, PARKER! WE'VE GOT A HAND OF TEXAS HOLD 'EM TO PLAY FOR ALL THE MARBLES!

ALEKSEI SYTSEVICH. *THE RHINO.*

HENCE THE SPIDER-SENSE WHICH MEANS I HAVE TO BREAK INTO *"PARKER'S SECRET STASH OF EXCUSES"* AND FIGURE OUT A WAY TO DUMP NORAH AND SLIP INTO THE WEBS--

NORAH, WAIT, LET'S CALL IT A NIGHT.

WITH THREE K OF MONOPOLY MONEY? HELLS NO! WE'RE GONNA CRASH AND BURN!

SERIOUSLY. WE'LL BUY THREE THOUSAND BIG BELLY BOMBERS. COME ON--

PARDON ME, MISS. IS THIS GENTLEMAN BOTHERING YOU?

YES, BUT ONLY IN A *"HE'S A KING WEENIE"* WAY, NOT IN A *"HE'S GRABBING MY GOODIES"* WAY, THANKS.

WAIT, YOU-- YOU WORK HERE?

AT THE MOMENT, I WORK FOR ***HER***. AND SO LONG AS SHE WANTS THE PLEASURE OF YOUR COMPANY YOU WILL BE ALLOWED TO ENJOY OUR CASINO.

OOH, I LIKE HIM! DO THEY SELL A MINI-YOU FOR THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS IN THE GIFT SHOP?

ALAS, MISS. I AM AN ORIGINAL.

HEY, ONE MORE THING.

IS THERE A HORSE RACE TONIGHT?

HOLY--

OH...WOW.

GET DOWN!

NOT SURE WHAT'S MAKING THIS MORE SURREAL...THE ROBO-RHINO...THE DAVID LYNCH HORSE THING...

...OR THE FACT THAT THE *REAL* *RHINO* JUST SAVED US FROM GETTING HURT.

WOW. OKAY, THAT WAS WICKED SICK. IF YOU WERE TWENTY-FIVE I'D TOTALLY MAKE OUT WITH YOU.

THANKS, BUT I'M MARRIED.

CODE 1. ALL UNITS TO HIGH ROLLER. 911 AND PARAMEDICS BACKUP--

SYTSEVICH!

A WORD, PLEASE.

WHO'S--?

=SIGH=

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, MISS.

I HAVE TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE. YOU SHOULD MOVE TO THE NEAREST EXIT QUICKLY. STAY LOW.

MY APOLOGIES FOR RUINING YOUR EVENING.

WOW. HE'S... CHANGED--

MAN CRUSH LATER! WORK NOW! I SAW SOME DISPOSABLE CAMERAS IN THE GIFT SHOP.

THINK YOU CAN SCORE SOME?

YEAH, BUT--

GO, PHOTOMONKEY, GO!

AND LIKE THAT, NORAH'S OVER HER FEAR OF REPORTING AND I HAVE MY EXCUSE TO GET AWAY...

THOUGH I'M CONFUSED AS HELL.

HNN. I EXPECTED YOU TO BE... FATTER.

I'M SORRY, BUT YOU HAVE ME MISTAKEN FOR SOMEONE ELSE.

THERE IS NO "SYTSEVICH" HERE.

THAT'S FUNNY, CAUSE I'M LOOKING RIGHT AT HIM...WHERE IS YOUR SKIN?

PLEASE. WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS NOT HERE.

DO NOT LIE TO ME!

I AM SHOWING YOU RESPECT SYTSEVICH!!!

ACKNOWLEDGE ME AS KIN, RHINO!

I'M NOT THE--

I WILL ONLY ASCEND IF I TAKE YOUR SKIN!

FIGHT ME!

YOU MUST BE A FIRST TIMER AT BLACKJACK...

IT'S "HIT ME!"

AND F.Y.I. SMASHING THE JOINT UP ISN'T GENERALLY PART OF THE GAME...

...UNLESS YOU'RE RUSSELL CROWE.

50

THIS IS NOT FOR YOU, BUG!

AND HE PASSES THE "BLUNT TRAUMA TO THE HEAD TEST."

THWIP

BUT LOW MARKS FOR COORDINATION, TACT, AND FASHION SENSE...

MENTAL ACUITY OF AN AVOCADO.

YOU *ARE* THE NEW RHINO! CONGRATS!

YEAH, YOU *COULD* BE THE *RHINO*...

ONE MORE TEST...

THWIP

ATTACK!

NO OFFENSE, ALEKSEI.

I--

SO, WHAT ARE YOU THE *"RHINETTES"* NOW? INSIDE MAN, OUTSIDE MAN SMASHER--?

GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE...

GOOD CALL.

NEIGGHHHH!

FACE ME, SYTSEVICH!

THAT'S JUST WRONG.

YOU'RE @#$%&%$@# RIGHT THAT'S WRONG!

GUYS, THE ASPCA IS GOING TO BE ALL OVER THIS PLACE IN TWO SECONDS, SO WHY DON'T WE...?

SKLTSCHHH

WHOA.

... THAT WAS MY ONLY GOOD WORK SUIT.

YOU WANT TO BE THE RHINO...

YOU *ARE* THE RHINO. IT'S DONE.

LEAVE BEFORE ANYONE ELSE IS HURT...

LEAVE AN OLD MAN BE, PLEASE.

SHOULDN'T YOU LIKE, BE SMASHING MORE OF SOMEONE ELSE'S PROPERTY OVER HIS HEAD TO NO EFFECT?

YOU'RE NOT AN EASY PERSON TO LIKE.

THE GIFTED RARELY ARE.

YOU WILL FIGHT ME. I WILL *ASCEND.*

PREPARE.

JUST LIKE THAT? YOU'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO STEAL SOME MONEY WHILE YOU'RE HERE?

HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, RHINEY TWO POINT NO, BUT YOU SUCK AT VILLAINING.

STAY OUT OF THIS, SPIDER, OR BLOOD WILL BE ON YOUR HANDS TOO.

THAT'S OKAY. RED WORKS WITH THE SUIT.

LET'S SEE WHAT YOU GOT--

VREEEEEEEEE

OW.

THOOM!

RASSUM FRASSUM

CAN I QUOTE YOU ON THAT?

MISS...CAN I BORROW YOUR PHONE?

I NEED TO CALL MY WIFE.

"HE'S FILING A POLICE REPORT. THE RHINO. A GUY WHO USED TO CRACK SAFES WITH HIS FACE IS SPILLING HIS GUTS TO A DESK SERGEANT WHO CAN BARELY LOOK HIM IN THE EYE.

"AND THE WIFE...THE WAY HE LOOKS AT HER WHEN HE DOESN'T WANT TO GIVE HIS REAL NAME. THE LITTLE SQUEEZE ON THE ARM THAT MEANS EVERYTHING.

"I DON'T HAVE A DATE FOR NEW YEAR'S EVE AND THE RHINO FOUND TRUE LOVE.

"WHAT A WORLD."

"BOX OF CHOCOLATES" FOR SURE.

SO ARE YOU, LIKE, SUFFERING POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS SYNDROME OR ARE WE GONNA HAVE AN HONESTY MOMENT ABOUT HOW YOU "GOT PINNED BY A RACEHORSE IN THE GIFT SHOP."

I DON'T LIKE THAT TONE...

C'MON, PARKER. IT'S NOT A CRIME TO POOP YOUR DECKS WHEN PEOPLE START HITTING PEOPLE WITH HORSES. JUST ADMIT IT.

I DID NOT--! HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO PUSH A HORSE OUT OF YOUR WAY? THEY'RE NOT NICE CREATURES!

SIGH LOOK, I'M GONNA DO THIS ONLY BECAUSE I'M MULTITASKING, SO THE EMO PART OF MY BRAIN IS FOCUSED ON THE ARTICLE...

I WROTE MY RESIGNATION LETTER TO BEN FIVE TIMES SINCE THE WHOLE AMERICAN SON FIASCO.

I GOT SO SCARED "PLAYING REPORTER" THAT I ALMOST QUIT DOING IT.

BUT THEN... I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU. ALL THOSE PICTURES YOU'VE TAKEN. THE CRAP YOU'VE LIVED THROUGH.

AND I DECIDED TO STOP PLAYING. I HAVE CHOSEN INSTEAD TO BE FREAKING AWESOME.

SO YOU CAN'T BUM MY AWESOME BY GOING LAME-O NOW, OKAY?

WOW, THANKS, NORAH...BUT IN ALL HONESTY, I WAS PINNED.

I KNOW, PEE-PANTS. I KNOW. SO DO YOU THINK IT'S OVER?

"NOT BY A LONG SHOT."

"THAT'S TOO BAD. MAYBE SOMETHING ABOUT BIG DUMB ANIMALS IN THE MIDDLE OF AN EXISTENTIAL CRISIS SINGS TO ME...

"...BUT I REALLY JUST WANT TO SEE HIM WIN."

BUTCHER SHOP

599

IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, I KNOW A PLACE WHERE THEY ACTUALLY *COOK* THE MEAT FIRST.

KEATON

SO MUCH FOR "*WITNESS PROTECTION.*" WHERE DID YOU PUT IT?

LEFT SOCK. SORRY. FORCE OF HABIT. I TRIED TO TAG THE OTHER ONE, BUT--

TOO FAST. I SAW.

DON'T TELL OKSANA YOU FOUND ME WITHOUT A JACKET. SHE WORRIES ABOUT MY HEALTH.

YOU HAD A HORSE BROKEN OPEN OVER YOUR HEAD. I THINK SHE'S A LITTLE OVER-PROTECTIVE.

I NO LONGER TAKE THE TREATMENTS, BUT MY BODY...SOME THINGS ARE IRREVERSIBLE.

WHAT ABOUT THE, "*CRIMINAL CAREER*" THING? CAUSE THE PRETTY WIFE AND THE DAY JOB AND THE NEW SUIT ARE CONVINCING...*BUT...*

WHAT'CHA GOT STASHED IN THAT STORE, ALEKSEI?

...

SOME PEOPLE NEED TO RAM THEIR HEAD THROUGH MANY WALLS BEFORE THEY FINALLY SEE THE DOOR.

AFTER THE REGISTRATIONS, AFTER THE *WAR*, I WAS GIVEN A CHANCE AT A LIFE AND I TOOK IT. I WALKED AWAY. IT...HAS NOT BEEN EASY.

WE SELL

OX TAILS

UNTIL HER.

OKSANA IS MY LIGHT. SHE IS RARE AND WONDERFUL.

SHE'S EVERYTHING. I AM *BLESSED*.

I HAVE MY TOOLS...I WILL DO WHAT I MUST TO PROTECT HER.

BUT NOW... THIS NEW ONE...I KNOW MEN LIKE THIS. HE WILL NOT LEAVE ME ALONE. YOU WILL NOT STOP HIM YOUR WAY.

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KILL HIM.

AND LOSE HER IN THE PROCESS? LET'S SAY I'M BUYING THE HORN-FREE NEW YOU...

PUT THAT SUIT BACK ON, NO MATTER *WHAT* THE INTENTIONS, AND THE *OLD* LIFE COMES WITH IT. YOU KNOW IT DOES.

YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT KEEPING WHAT YOU'VE BUILT WITH HER?

PROVE IT.

DON'T LET SOME JERK IN A SUIT TAKE AWAY SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL.

WHY DO YOU CARE?

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #617

BECAUSE LATELY...IT'S LIKE... IT'S LIKE *NO ONE IS WINNING.*

ALL AROUND ME, PEOPLE ARE DYING, LOSING THEMSELVES, DESTROYING THEIR OWN LIVES... AND I...

I'D LIKE JUST ONE IN THE *WIN* COLUMN, YOU KNOW? JUST ONE.

I'D LIKE TO SEE *YOU WIN*, ALEKSEI.

LET THE LAW HANDLE IT. LET ME HANDLE IT. CAN YOU DO THAT?

ALEKSEI?

FOR HER, I CAN DO ANYTHING.

I CAN EVEN BE A COWARD.

THANK YOU.

NO... THANK *YOU.*

YOU LIED!!

YOU LIED TO ME!

THERE IS NO *HONOR* IN DEFEATING A BROKEN *OLD MAN!* HE IS *NOTHING!* *BENEATH* ME!

HOW CAN I *ASCEND* WHEN HE IS *BENEATH* ME?!

*HOW CAN YOU **ASCEND** WHEN YOU CANNOT LEARN **PATIENCE!?***

WHAT--?

*PATIENCE! NO HUNTER EARNS VICTORY WITHOUT PAYING ALMS FIRST TO **PATIENCE.***

NO *HERO* MAKES HIS JOURNEY WITHOUT *TRIALS!*

TRIALS... KRAVINOFF? THIS...THIS IS A TRIAL?

THE FIRST. AND *SOON...VERY SOON...*

I WILL GET YOU THE INFORMATION YOU NEED--*ALL OF THE INFORMATION YOU NEED*--FOR THE NEXT TRIAL...

THIS IS NOT OVER MY FRIEND.

NOT AT ALL.

YOU CANNOT ALWAYS BELIEVE YOUR EYES.

Next:

CAFE TATIANA

МУЗЫКА

--DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH! HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS ARE ON THEIR WAY!

WE EXPECT YOUR LIST OF DEMANDS.

<"DEMANDS"... DEMANDS? I DEMAND...>

TRANSLATED FROM RUSSIAN

<ANOTHER, VASILI.>

<AND PLEASE, DON'T WASTE THE GOOD STUFF ON ME. MY TASTE BUDS NO LONGER CARE.>

<FEH. NOW I KNOW YOU'VE GONE MAD. THAT POTATO WATER IS FOR TOURISTS ONLY.>

<WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS, ALEKSEI?>

<SINCE WHEN DO WE NEED AN EXCUSE FOR VODKA?>

<YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. THE SKIN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT. CALLING THEM?>

<"BECAUSE THE CAT KNOWS WHOSE MEAT IT HAS EATEN..."> <AND IT'S TIME HE'S SKINNED FOR IT.>

ZA VAS.

IT MAKES EVERY NEWS OUTLET. "*DRUNKEN RHINO CAGES SELF.*" AND WITH ONE HEADLINE, THAT IS THE END OF MY STORY. NO ONE CARES. WHY SHOULD THEY? CIVIL WAR IS ERUPTING.

I AM A DUMB ANIMAL FINALLY LOCKED AWAY.

I AM SKINNED BY PROFESSIONALS FROM S.H.I.E.L.D. IT IS PAINFUL. IT IS A REBIRTH.

THE TRIAL TAKES EXACTLY FORTY-EIGHT HOURS. I PLEAD GUILTY TO ALL CRIMES. I REGISTER. I WANT ONLY FOR IT TO END.

FOR COOPERATING, I AM TREATED WITH LENIENCY FOR MY CRIMES. TWENTY FIVE YEARS.

THE WALK

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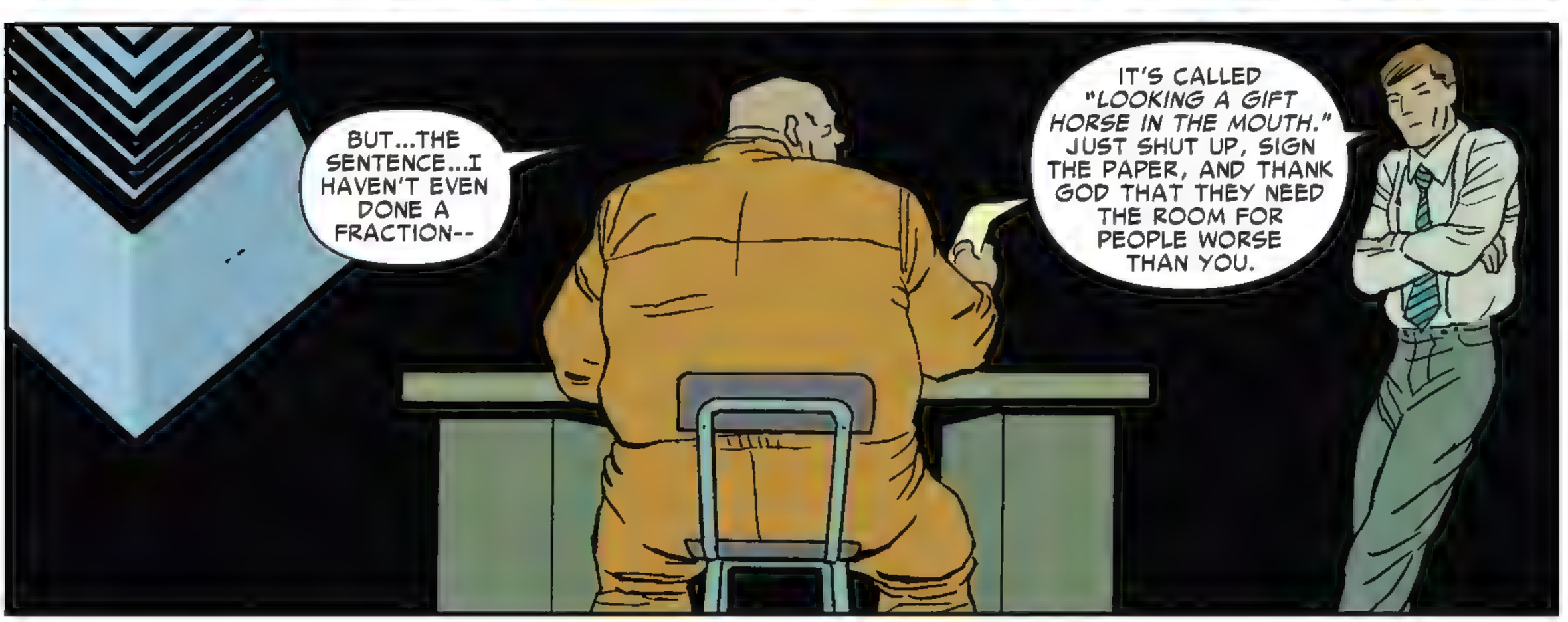
〈NO.〉
〈"NO?!" THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU? WE'RE GETTING CRUSHED BY THE SAN SALVADORANS AND THE WHITE SUPREMACIST GANGS--〉
〈I AM IN THE MACHINIST'S SHOP. I CAN MAKE YOU A HORN.〉
〈YES.〉
〈THE SAME BLOOD RUNS IN OUR VEINS! YOU WOULD TURN YOUR BACK ON A COUNTRYMAN?!〉

IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW I FEEL. I WILL DO HERE WHAT I ALWAYS DO.
I PUT ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER UNTIL EVENTUALLY I WALK FROM HERE INTO A NEW LIFE.
YOU OUT YOUR MIND, SON! "NEW LIFE"? IN A ZOO MAYBE!
I ALREADY HAVE.
DO YOU TRULY THINK YOU CAN CHANGE?

D-DON'T MOVE, SYTSEVICH.
CAN I GET MORE SALT?
Y-YOU'RE NOT RUNNING?
I DO NOT QUIT WHAT I BEGIN.


BUT...THE SENTENCE...I HAVEN'T EVEN DONE A FRACTION--
IT'S CALLED "LOOKING A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH." JUST SHUT UP, SIGN THE PAPER, AND THANK GOD THAT THEY NEED THE ROOM FOR PEOPLE WORSE THAN YOU.

GOOD FOOD
DINER
Menu
WHAT CAN I GET YOU?
...
YOU HAVE ALREADY GOTTEN ME SOMETHING I HAVE NOT ORDERED.
CALCULATED RISK.
MOST OF THE MEN FROM RYKERS START WITH COFFEE AND WANT DESSERT BEFORE THEY ORDER ANYTHING ELSE.
WHY DO YOU THINK I AM FROM RYKERS?
BECAUSE YOU GOT OFF THAT BUS.
BECAUSE YOU DON'T OWN A COAT OR A HAT OR AN UMBRELLA--
OH, IT'S RAINING.
AND BECAUSE YOU CAME HERE TO EAT...
NO ONE BUT AN EX-CON OR A MAN DYING OF STARVATION WOULD COME HERE. EVERYTHING IS TERRIBLE.
EXCEPT FOR THE CAKE.
YOU SEEM TO HAVE IT FIGURED OUT.
SO WHAT WILL HAPPEN NEXT?

WELL, DESPITE MY WARNING, MOST EX-CONS ASK FOR A MINUTE TO CHECK THE MENU.

THEY'RE QUIET AND AWKWARD FOR A FEW MINUTES TRYING TO FIND SOMETHING TO EAT...

...ALL THE WHILE DOING EVERYTHING THEY CAN *NOT* TO LOOK AT ME.

BUT ONCE I RETURN AND TAKE THE ORDER...THINGS CHANGE.

ONCE WE "*CONNECT*" IN THAT MOST INNOCENT OF TRANSACTIONS, THEY BECOME UNABLE TO *STOP* LOOKING AT ME.

NOT BECAUSE I'M SO BEAUTIFUL, BUT BECAUSE I AM THE FIRST WOMAN THEY'VE SEEN IN MONTHS...YEARS...

AFTER THAT THERE IS ONE VARIABLE. WHETHER OR NOT THE "CUSTOMER" HAS THE CASH TO PAY FOR THE MEAL. THAT'S THE ONLY MYSTERY--

I HAVE MONEY--

BECAUSE BY THE TIME THEY HAVE FINISHED DINNER, THEY HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH ME.

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THAT?

NO, THANK YOU.

IF IT INVOLVES LOVE OF ANY KIND, IT IS NOT FOR ME.

GOODBYE.

LAST WEEK OF THE MONTH. AND I DON'T CARE WHO YOU ARE, I BREAK YOUR ASS IF YOU'RE LATE.

I DON'T WANT GAWKERS ON MY STOOP, MISTER "POPOV." SO DO YOU HAVE A JOB?

HEH. THANK YOU VASILI. I WILL PAY. AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR DISCRETION.

I'M SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND, MISTER *SYTSEVICH* THAT WE ARE FACING CERTAIN *UNIQUE CHALLENGES* HERE.

AND WHO ISN'T "*IN THIS ECONOMY*" RIGHT? BUT WE ALSO HAVE THE *CRIMINAL RECORD* TO WRANGLE...

...AND IN PARTICULAR A *SUPER CRIMINAL* RECORD AT THAT. YOU SEE THE *PICKLE* WE'RE IN HERE--

NO. I SEE YOU FAILING TO DO YOUR *JOB.*

AS I SAW AT THE LAST *EIGHT AGENCIES* WHERE INSIPID BOTTOM FEEDERS BLAMED THEIR OWN INEPTITUDE ON "*THIS ECONOMY*" OR MY "*RECORD.*"

S-SECURITY...

I WANT TO *WORK.* LIKE A *MAN.*

SECURITY?

YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF. YOU *TRIED.* SERIOUSLY.

WALKED THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW LIKE A REAL *HUMAN BEING.*

HOW MANY PEOPLE *LIKE YOU* CAN EVEN SAY THAT?

BUT THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW *SUCKS*, DOESN'T IT?

I KNOW. I USED TO BE AN O.B. AND I SWEAR TO YOU EVERY TIME I BROUGHT A BABY INTO THE WORLD A PART OF ME *DIED*.

WE'RE *NOT LIKE THEM.*

WE'RE *MONSTERS*, AND TO DENY THAT IS *FOOLISH. HENCE*, MY PROPOSAL TO YOU...

(SNFF)

I HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH *PARTIES* LOOKING TO BEEF UP THEIR ARSENAL WITH SOME SERIOUS *POST-HUMAN ORDNANCE.*

I'VE STUDIED YOU FOR *YEARS*, AND THE MONEY ASIDE, I GET HOT AT JUST THE THOUGHT OF GETTING IN THERE AND REBUILDING--

HELLO? SYTSEVICH?

ONE MOMENT, DOCTOR TRAMMA.

THE COFFEE HERE ISN'T GOOD, BUT NOT WORTH CRYING OVER.

I'M SORRY. I LOST MY...

...JOB? I REMEMBER YOU.

WHY DID YOU LOSE YOUR JOB?

...

BECAUSE I WAS MEAN TO THE CUSTOMERS. LIKE YOU.

HEH. MEAN OR TRUTHFUL?

I THINK IT IS MY FAULT YOU LOST YOUR JOB.

I DIDN'T FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU AND IT BROKE YOUR STREAK.

HA! YOU... HEH...I DON'T THINK SO. HONESTLY...? I SAY THAT TO SCARE THEM OFF...

SO THEN WHAT HAPPENS, USUALLY?

MOST OF THEM...MOST OF THEM GO BACK, TO WHAT THEY DID BEFORE.

WHY, DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

I DON'T KNOW. BECAUSE THEY KNOW NO OTHER WAY? I DON'T KNOW...BECAUSE THEY STOP.

STOP WHAT?

SOMETHING MY GRANDFATHER USED TO SAY...

A MAN CAN LIVE FOREVER IF HE DOES ONE SIMPLE THING. JUST PUT ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING...

SYTSEVICH? ARE WE DONE HERE OR WHAT?

DON'T...

DON'T STOP. KEEP WALKING. START BY HAVING DINNER WITH ME?

WHY?

BECAUSE IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT I KNOW HOW TO DO...IT IS TO PUT ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER.

SO YOU WANT TO LIVE FOREVER?

"NO...I JUST WANT TO *LIVE.*

"ALEKSEI."

"OKSANA."

"ONE THING, OKSANA...I'LL BUY YOU DINNER... BUT DO NOT EXPECT ME TO FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU.

The End.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #4 — “GAUNTLET ORIGINS: MYSTERIO”

GAUNTLET: ORIGINS

MYSTERIO

SPIDER-M

Then...

The Magic Manse, Hollywood CA.

HOME TO THE ACADEMY OF SCREEN ILLUSIONISTS

SO...LET'S MAKE THIS INTERESTING, SHALL WE, MR. BECK?

A *HUNDRED* SAYS THESE *"MARVELS"* ACTUALLY *EXIST.*

BUGLE

OH, I BELIEVE THEY *EXIST*, MR. BRADHAUS. AS *EXHIBITIONISTS* PARADING AROUND IN *FETISH GEAR* FOR TV COVERAGE.

BUT THEIR SO-CALLED *"POWERS?"* PLEASE. NOT ONLY DO I *NOT* BELIEVE THEM...

enit ad feugiat, zzril nulla accumsan lorem vero ullamcorper nulla, ad
eros, duis, exerci ea, laoreet. Nibh diam, veniam nonummy dol
tis tincidunt, eum dolore ex ipsum augue luptatum
t accumsan feugiat. Nulla in dolor dolor au
ut wisi et dolore blandit illum at
wisi ex minim nisl illum
t diam conseq
modo

...I THINK A MAESTRO LIKE *YOU* COULD'VE IMPROVED ON THE AMATEUR HOUR GAGS THEY USE TO DUPE THE NEWSPAPERS A *THOUSANDFOLD.*

HEH! YOU GIVE YOUR MENTOR FAR TOO MUCH *CREDIT.*

WHAT ABOUT *REED RICHARDS?* YOU DON'T BELIEVE REED RICHARDS?

EVERYBODY BELIEVES REED RICHARDS.

RICHARDS! *PFFFT.*

SAME BREED OF PHONIES FAKED THE MOON LANDING.

MARTIANS STRUCK

STARRING GENIE KING

YOU ENGINEERED A MORE IMPRESSIVE ROCKET CRASH ON THE DAY THE MARTIANS STRUCK.

COLOSSUS

ROSE BURNEY

I ACTUALLY BOUGHT YOUR BIG STRONG MONSTER MADE OF ORANGE ROCK IN COLOSSUS.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

AND YOU DON'T STOP WITH STOP-MOTION.

WHEN COMPETITION FROM CGI GOT HEAVY, YOU STEPPED UP YOUR GAME.

LIKE THAT WALL GAG.

EFFECTS BY RAY BRADHAUS

IN THAT ITALIAN FLICK, THE ONE YOU DID WITH ARGENTO-- I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DID IT.

THE WEIGHT TO IT. THE SHADOWING.

THE GRACE OF THE THING AS IT DESCENDED.

MINUTE I SAW THAT GAG ON MONSTER MATINEE AS A KID...

...I KNEW WHAT MY LIFE WAS GONNA BE.

YOU WOULDN'T MIND TELLING ME HOW YOU DID IT? AFTER ALL THESE YEARS?

A-HA! I KNEW YOU WERE BUTTERING ME UP FOR SOMETHING!

SORRY, QUENTIN, WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS LONG ENOUGH FOR YOU TO KNOW I WON'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

BUT WHEN IT COMES TO "MARVELS," I HAVE A FRIEND ON HIS WAY TO JOIN US...

...WHO'LL MAKE YOUR WALLET A HUNDRED DOLLARS *LIGHTER*...

MY GOD, WHAT--

STARRING GENE KING & DON HECKLEY

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? *QUENTIN!*

SHOULD I GET THE--

KKKK

HOW--

HOW--

SORRY, RAY.

WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS LONG ENOUGH FOR YOU TO KNOW I WON'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION.

AND YOU *ARE* A GOOD FRIEND, RAY.

I BEEN SITTING HERE DRINKING YOUR BOOZE FOR OVER AN HOUR AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN *HINT* AT IT.

BUT YOU *MUST* HAVE HEARD, *RETIRED* OR NOT. THIS TOWN *RUNS* ON SCHADENFREUDE.

ALL HOLLYWOOD'S WAGGING THEIR TONGUES ABOUT THE *EFFECTS MONKEY* WHO NEARLY *FRICASSEED* BROOKS DARWIN.

OVERRATED EGOMANIAC MISSED HIS *MARK*. PRACTICALLY STEPPED *INTO* MY CHARGE.

SHOULD CONSIDER HIMSELF *LUCKY* THE BURNS ONLY COVER *EIGHTY PERCENT* OF HIS BODY.

HIS WORD AGAINST *MINE*, THOUGH. AND HE'S AN *A-LISTER*...

...SO I'M *BLACKLISTED*.

AS ALWAYS, THOUGH, YOU GAVE ME *INSPIRATION*, RAY.

FOR MY *NEXT* CAREER.

BUT FOR IT TO WORK...

...I NEED YOUR *WALL GAG*.

PROJECTIONS, MIRRORS, SCRIMS.

THE OLD COOTS HAVE SPARED NO EXPENSE TO PROTECT THEIR *SECRETS*.

NO WONDER YOU KEEP THE ARCHIVE OF YOUR *LIFE'S WORK* HERE.

BUT IT WON'T *STOP* ME. I'LL *SURPASS* YOU, RAY.

HELMET *ECHOLOCATION* LETS ME SPOT THE TRIGGER POINTS IN THE WALLS THAT ACTIVATE YOUR *ROGER CORMANS*.

TUNNG

SPRINGS IN THE BOOTS LET ME DODGE 'EM.

AND ACCORDING TO MY SONAR...

...I'M LOOKING AT...

...NOTHING.

HOLOGRAM.

ALMOST CLEVER.

BINGO! I'M GETTING *SHIVERS* HERE.

LIKE DROPPING INTO MY OWN *CHILDHOOD.*

RIGHT OUT OF RAY'S ARGENTO FLICK.

SO...WHERE YOU *HIDING* IT, RAY?

IT'S KEY TO THE KICKOFF OF MY *NEW CAREER*...IMPERSONATING THIS "*SPIDER-MAN*" BOZO IN NEW YORK.

I FIGURE, COMMIT SOME CRIMES *AS* HIM, DRIVE UP THE REWARD THE *DAILY BUGLE* IS OFFERING...

...THEN TAKE HIM DOWN IN *THIS*, MY *OWN* "MARVEL" PERSONA, AND *CASH IN.*

PRETTY SIMPLE. AND I GOT HIS "*SFX-FOR-DUMMIES*" PARLOR TRICKS, INCLUDING THE *WEBBING*, DOWN PAT...

...EXCEPT THE *WALL-CRAWLING* BIT. I'VE TRIED MAGNETS AND SUCTION CUPS, BUT I'M NOT THRILLED WITH THE *RESULTS.*

SO I GOT TO FIGURE OUT HOW *YOU* DID YOUR--

GGRRLLGGG

GRRRAAAAGGGLLLLHHHH

AAAAAAHH!!

MY

GOD

SKRRCCHH

AAHH!

WHAT

IN GAUNTLET

SSSSSS

ACID

EYYARRLLGGGGG!!

EEEYYYAAHHHH!!

SPRING, YOU IDIOT

SPRING!!!

GRRRAAGGGHHLLL

KRAKKKEN

DAMN CAPE

TOO LONG, TOO.

WEB-GUN

WEB-GUN

WAIT FOR IT

USE THE SONAR

TIME IT RIGHT THIS TIME, MORON

NOW!

THWIPP

NOW!!!

THWAPP

TUNG—

KKRRRAAHKKK

HAHAHAH!!! YES!

GOT YOU, YOU UGLY SON OF A---

HAHAHAHAHA...

ANOTHER ILLUSION...GOOD ONE, RAY...THE BEST!

I DON'T NEED YOU ANYMORE!!

SKRRAASSHH

YOU HEAR ME, RAY?!?

BUT I STILL BEAT IT.

ME!

WHO'S THE MAESTRO NOW?!

RAY! RAY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

HNNNNH... WHAT...

STEPHEN! NO...IT GOT OUT AGAIN?

SHHHH. EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT. I DISPELLED IT IN MY *INVISIBLE ECTOPLASMIC FORM.*

I WOULD HAVE BEEN HERE *ON TIME* FOR DRINKS, BUT YOU ANGELENOS DON'T KNOW HOW TO DRIVE IN THE *RAIN*--

I'M SUCH A *FOOL*--TURNING TO THE *DARK ARTS* FOR A *MOVIE EFFECT*--

BINDING *THAT THING* TO ME! WILL I NEVER BE *FREE* OF IT?

I'VE SAVED YOU *TWICE* ALREADY, RAY, AND I'M READY TO DO IT *AGAIN.*

I WOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN THROUGH *MED SCHOOL* WITHOUT YOU AND *MONSTER MATINEE*...

QUENTIN!! WHERE IS HE?! IT COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN HIM, COULD IT?

WHO?

MY PROTÉGÉ...I WANTED YOU TO MEET HIM...

I'M SUCH AN OLD *COWARD*... I NEVER HAD THE GUTS TO TELL HIM...

WITH THE COMPUTERS KILLING MY *STOP-MOTION* BUSINESS...

THAT *TRICK* OF MINE HE ADMIRES SO MUCH...

...WASN'T A TRICK AT ALL...

MYSTERIO

PRODUCTZIONI

Speial Effects by

Ray Bradhaus

MARVEL 618 .com

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #618

THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE NOT BEEN KIND TO THE MAGGIA CRIME FAMILY.

IT STARTED AT THE OLD EMPYREAN OPERA HOUSE...

...WHEN UNDERBOSS ALBERTO KARNELLI WAS GUNNED DOWN IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS FAVORITE ARIA.

HE WENT FACE FIRST INTO A PLATE OF POISONED CAPELLINI.

NEXT THERE WAS CONSIGLIERE EDDIE COSTA.

SOON AFTER THAT, CAPO MILO MANFREDI HAD A LITTLE "CAR TROUBLE" ON HIS WAY TO A COURT HEARING.

LATER, ENFORCER TONY "TWO-STEP" GALLO FOUND A QUICK WAY TO SHORTEN HIS LIFE SENTENCE.

NUMBERS MAN PAULO MUNOZ WENT MISSING FOR A WHILE, TILL HE SHOWED UP AT THE ZOO'S REPTILE HOUSE...

DON'T FEED THE ANIMALS

...AS A LEFT EAR, A LOAFER, AND TWO HUNDRED POUNDS OF ALLIGATOR DROPPINGS.

THEN JOE KARNELLI JUNIOR LEFT THE BUSINESS THE SAME WAY HE CAME INTO IT: IN CONSTRUCTION.

VINCENZO KARNELLI WAS ON HAND WHEN HIS GENTLEMAN'S CLUB BURNED DOWN.

THEY HAD TO HAVE A CLOSED COFFIN CEREMONY.

AS DID FOUR MADE MEN FROM THE MANFREDI CLAN.

NOBODY LIKES TO TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY WERE MADE INTO.

OR WHY THE OFFICERS WHO FOUND 'EM STOPPED BUYING CHOPS FROM FERRARA'S BUTCHER SHOP.

AND THEN THERE WAS THAT INCIDENT AT THE SCRAP YARD A FEW MONTHS AGO WITH SILVIO MANFREDI...

AHHH!

HE WAS DON OF THE ENTIRE FAMILY. MOST PEOPLE CALLED HIM BY HIS OTHER NAME, SILVERMANE. YOU KNOW...

...THAT OLD GUY IN THE BIG, METAL ROBOT SUIT.

HAMMERHEAD! GET ME *DOWN* FROM HERE!

IN A SEC, BOSS! LOOKS LIKE THE OWL'S GOONS ARE MAKIN' THEIR MOVE!

HAMMERHEAD!

DON MANFREDI?

JOSEPH! DO SOMETHING!!

SILVER-MANE!

BOSS! NO!!

KRRRRRRRKRRKKRRRKKRKYEEEKKRRRNCHKLANGKRRRRCCHHHKKKK

KRUNCH

BUT THE SINGLE BIGGEST BLOW TO THE ORGANIZATION CAME NOT TOO LONG AGO...

...WHEN MR. NEGATIVE, THE MYSTERIOUS CRIME BOSS OF CHINATOWN...

...UNLEASHED A DEADLY POISON AT A MAGGIA SIT-DOWN, KILLING EVERY ADULT MALE IN THE FAMILY...

...SAVE THIS GUY: BABY BRUNO KARNELLI, A MAN WHO'S TURNED "ORGANIZED CRIME" INTO AN OXYMORON.

SO WITH NEGATIVE'S GUYS MAKING MORE AND MORE HITS ON OUR LEGITIMATE BUSINESSES, WE'RE RUNNING OUTTA WAYS TO LAUNDER OUR MONEY.

BUT DON'T WORRY, I GOT A PLAN! IT'S LIKE THIS...

$100

WE USE THAT CASH IN OUR UNDERGROUND CASINOS. GAMBLERS WILL GIVE US CLEAN BILLS FOR CHIPS...

AND THEN WE'LL PAY 'EM OUT IN DIRTY MONEY. SMART, HUH? EVEN WHEN WE LOSE, IT'S A WIN-WIN.

THAT OLD GAG? DON KARNELLI, NOBODY DOES THAT ANYMORE.

BRUNO, YOU CAN'T--

CARMINE, YOU'RE HIS CONSIGLIERE, TALK SOME SENSE INTO 'IM.

LISTEN TO ME, BRUNO, IT WON'T WORK.

TAKE THAT BANK JOB WE DID LAST MONTH. A LOT OF THAT'S IN SEQUENTIAL BILLS.

WE START MOVING THAT THROUGH OUR GAMBLING DENS, THE COPS WILL TRACE IT BACK TO US.

OR *WORSE*, MR. NEGATIVE WILL.

GEEZ, CARMINE. YOU WORRY TOO MUCH. TAKE A CHANCE. LIVE A LITTLE.

$100

LOOKIT ALLA' THESE FRICKIN' KUNG FU GUYS! THEY'RE *EVERYWHERE!*

THEY'RE MR. NEGATIVE'S INNER-DEMONS.

WHATEVER! THEY'RE SLAUGHTERIN' US! *DAMN IT*, CARMINE. YOU GOT THE BRAINS, YOU SHOULD BE CALLIN' THE SHOTS! NOT THAT CRAZY-@#% BRUNO!

HE'S GOT THE KARNELLI BLOOD, SAL. IN THE MAGGIA, THAT BEATS BRAINS.

GAHH!

THE HELL?! HAMMERHEAD?! WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' WITH THESE PUNKS?! YOU'RE A MAGGIA GUY! YOU'RE-- MMPH!

NOT ANYMORE. I TRADED UP!

HM. GUESS I CAN'T BLAME YA. ALL THINGS CONSIDERED...

...SEEMS LIKE A PRETTY SMART MOVE.

ZZAAWW

THWIP

HEY, LOOK HERE! IT'S SPIDER-MAN! AND HE'S ON OUR SIDE!

OH-HO-NO! DON'T EVEN!

I'D DO THIS FOR ANYONE! A-N-Y-O-N-E! CAPEESH?!!

WRITER SLOTT
ARTIST MARTIN RODRIGUEZ
COLORS CRAMALVA
LETTERS NINE

MYSTERIOSO
FOUR-MURDER INCORPORATED
12 PAYS DOUBLE

BIG 8
BIG 6

ALAN FINE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

STEPHEN WACKER GAMBLER

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TOM BREVOORT EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Flamingo HILTON

I'M AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LIFE-SAVING KINDA GUY.

DAMSELS IN DISTRESS, DOGS THAT RUN INTO TRAFFIC, EVEN DIRTBAGS LIKE YOU.

SAL, YOU OKAY?

YEAH. HOW'D THE WALL-CRAWLER GET HERE?

MUST A' BEEN TRACKIN' NEGATIVE'S GUYS. HE COULD CARE LESS ABOUT THE MAGGIA.

WE'RE JUST A BIG JOKE TO HIM. THAT'S *ALL* WE ARE ANYMORE. ONE BIG JOKE.

HAMMERHEAD! LONG TIME, NO SEE, FLATTOP! I'LL GET TO YOU IN A SEC. HERE, TAKE A NUMBER. TAKE 38 OF 'EM.

OOMPH--

HEY, HERE'S A FUN GAME. LET'S PLAY 52 PICKUP! WITH YOUR TEETH.

THWAK

ALL RIGHT YOU GUYS. WE'RE DONE HERE.

BUT MR. NEGATIVE SAID--

NEGATIVE PUT ME IN CHARGE. I'M HIS HAMMER.

HE WANTED THIS PLACE BROKEN. WELL, IT'S BROKE.

C'MON!

AW. WAS IT SOMETHING I SAID?

LOOKS LIKE YOUR PLAYMATES ARE TAKING OFF. AND THE MAGGIA-BOYS, TOO.

COULDN'T MAKE MY LIFE EASIER AND ALL GO IN THE SAME DIRECTION, COULD YOU?

SEE YA AROUND, WALL-CRAWLER! AND THANKS FOR THE ASSIST.

YOU'RE GOOD PEOPLE.

WHAT? SPIDEY'S WORKIN' FOR THE MOB NOW?

THE MAYOR'S RIGHT. GUY'S A MENACE.

WAIT, IT'S NOT LIKE THAT. I'M A *GOOD* GUY!

THAT MEANS I GOTTA SAVE *EVERYBODY*. EVEN *BAD* GUYS, RIGHT?

GO STUFF YOURSELF.

OUCH.

TOUGH ROOM.

ONLY BABY BRUNO WOULD THINK OF STUFFIN' HIS CASH IN A MATTRESS SHOWROOM.

PIGGY BANK STORE MUSTA' BEEN CLOSED.

HEY, YOU THINK IT'S SAFE TO LEAVE COOPER ALONE WITH ALL THAT *"EVIDENCE"*?

HEAR SHE'S BEEN SKIRTIN' THE RULES LATELY.

CAN'T BELIEVE SHE'S RAY COOPER'S KID. NOW *HE* WAS A GOOD COP.

LIKE I CAN'T HEAR YOU? GEEZ.

SMELLS FISHY.

THAT A CLUE?

YOU NEVER CAN TELL--

PETER? HI! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

HEY, CARLIE. THOUGHT I MIGHT PICK UP SOME FREELANCE SHOTS FOR *FRONT LINE*...

...AND TAKE MY FAVORITE C.S.I. GAL OUT FOR LUNCH. SAY, YOU CHANGED YOUR HAIR.

YOU NOTICED.

YEAH. LOOKS CUTE. SO HOW 'BOUT IT?

UM. OKAY.

WAIT. WHAT AM I DOING?

I WANTED TO GET SOME INFO BEFORE NEGATIVE'S GOONS SLAUGHTER MORE MAGGIA GUYS...

...BUT THIS ISN'T RIGHT. CARLIE'S INTO ME AS PETE. BUT AS SPIDEY I'VE BEEN SEEING BLACK CAT.

I REALLY COULD *USE* A LEAD, BUT...

...BASICALLY THIS'S A MAGGIA STASH HOUSE. WE TRACKED SOME STOLEN CASH HERE. BUT I THINK SOMEONE ON THE FORCE TIPPED OFF MR. NEGATIVE ABOUT IT.

SO, EVEN AFTER WE ROUNDED UP VIN AND ALL OF THOSE DIRTY COPS, THERE'S *STILL* A LEAK IN THE DEPARTMENT.

AH WELL. GUESS THE HONEYMOON'S OVER.

AUNT MAY!

I TOTALLY FORGOT! I'M SUPPOSED TO PICK HER AND JAY UP AT THE AIRPORT!

RANDY ROBERTSON EVEN LOANED ME HIS CAR. LOOK, I GOTTA GO. WE'LL DO LUNCH SOME OTHER TIME?

SURE.

GOD, WHY AM I SUCH A DOORMAT AROUND HIM?

HE CAN BE SUCH A JERK SOMETIMES. MAYBE I SHOULD JUST FORGET ABOUT PETER PARKER. AFTER ALL...

...THERE'S GOTTA BE SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO'S INTERESTED IN ME.

"HE'S GOING TO BE THE DEATH OF US, ISN'T HE?"

I KNOW YOUR NEPHEW MEANS WELL, BUT...

YES, DEAR.

PETER, NOT THAT I'M BACK-SEAT DRIVING, BUT YOU DO KNOW HOW, DON'T YOU?

YEP! SURPRISE! PRETTY GOOD, HUH? A WHILE BACK I ALMOST GOT A TAXI LICENSE.

YEAH. IT DIDN'T WORK OUT.

"ALMOST"?

PETER, WHY DON'T YOU PULL OVER UP HERE?

BACK IN ASM #577
--STEVE.

F.E.A.S.T.

IT'S BEEN WEEKS SINCE I CHECKED IN WITH EVERYONE AT THE F.E.A.S.T. CENTER.

SCREEEEEE

SURE THING, AUNT MAY. HERE'S A LITTLE CURBSIDE SERVICE FOR YA.

THANK THE LORD!

SO, YOU WANT ME TO WAIT? KEEP THE OL' METER RUNNING?

NO, THAT'S FINE, DEAR. YOU CAN GO ON TO JAY'S APARTMENT WITHOUT ME. IT'LL GIVE YOU TWO A CHANCE TO BOND.

MAYYY!

AND BESIDES...

"...I'M SURE MY BOSS, MARTIN LI, AND I HAVE A LOT OF CATCHING UP TO DO."

SO YOU'RE SAYING SPIDER-MAN INTERFERED WITH MY PLANS. AGAIN.

AND? HOW DID YOU DISPATCH HIM?

UM... WE DIDN'T, BOSS.

WE CAME STRAIGHT TO YOU. THOUGHT YOU'D WANNA KNOW.

THAT SPIDER-MAN HAS CHALLENGED MY AUTHORITY. AND STILL LIVES.

WELL, YEAH. WHAT'D YOU EXPECT? HE'S SPIDER-MAN.

AND THERE WAS ONLY A HANDFUL OF US.

SHOULDN'T A' SAID THAT.

I WILL ACCEPT NO EXCUSES.

SHZZ

WAIT! I DIDN'T MEAN--

YOU ARE MY INNER-DEMONS. YOU CANNOT DIE.

HE IS A MAN. YOU WISH TO KILL HIM? STRIKE EVERY TIME...

SLSHH

"...RIGHT AT HIS HEART!"
MAY!
WELCOME BACK, MRS. PARKER.
AH! IT'S MRS. JAMESON NOW.
HOW WAS THE HONEYMOON?
JUST WONDERFUL. WE'LL TALK LATER. I JUST WANT TO SAY HELLO TO...
...MARTIN?
MAYBE HE'S IN THE BACK. NOW LET'S SEE, BACK WHEN MARTIN THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE MAYOR...
...HE GAVE ME ALL THE CODES TO RUN THIS PLACE WITHOUT HIM...
WHAT?!
MR. LI? IS THAT YOU?
WAIT! ONE SECOND...
UM...I CAN EXPLAIN...
GNHHH

GOD IN HEAVEN...

MRS. PARKER? EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT. THIS IS ALL AN ACT...

UH...A PERFORMANCE. FOR CHINESE NEW YEAR.

HE'S FINE. SEE?

HE'S GETTING UP.

BUT ALL THAT BLOOD...

...AND I *KNOW* THAT MAN!

HE'S THAT HORRIBLE CRIMINAL... HAMMERHEAD!

SOMETHING'S WRONG HERE. I-I SHOULD TELL SOMEONE...

NO. YOU SHOULDN'T

THE KARNELLI ESTATE, LONG ISLAND.

NOBODY FEARS US ANYMORE.

THE BANKS WON'T HOLD OUR STUFF. WE GOT NO WAY TO LAUNDER IT.

AND THE POLICE HAVE *GOTTA* BE CLOSING IN ON OUR LAST LOCATION.

BRUNO, PLEASE. WE'VE GOTTA MOVE THE CASH AGAIN.

WHAT? =CHOMP= YOU WANT ME TO *SPEND* MONEY TO *MOVE* MONEY? THAT AIN'T NO WAY TO RUN A BUSINESS. =SHLURP=

WE DON'T PUT IT SOMEWHERE ELSE, WE COULD LOSE *ALL* OF IT. THINK ABOUT IT FOR--

ALL RIGHT. THERE. I THOUGHT ABOUT IT. =CHOMP= WHAT'S NEXT?

I'VE HAD ENOUGH. SHOW THE BOYS IN.

BOYS? WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT--

HOLY-- THIS CAN'T *BE!* ALL A' YOU! YOU'RE ALL SUPPOSED TO BE--

DEAD? I WOULD BE.

IF I HADN'T BEEN SHOT UP WITH BLANKS AND BLOOD PACKS.

OR IF I DIDN'T HAVE AN ANTIDOTE IN THE HOUSE RED.

OR A TRAPDOOR UNDER MY CAR.

A REINFORCED COLLAR SAVED MY NECK.

LUCKY STIFF. I HAD TO PULL A "VAN GOGH."

NOT ME. I COULD AFFORD THE DELUXE PACKAGE: ROBOT DOUBLE.

ROBOT? NOT FOR A FIRE. I JUST HAD TO FIND SOMEONE AROUND MY HEIGHT.

MY BOYS AND I WERE WORRIED 'BOUT DNA. SO WE SPRUNG FOR-- WHATTYA CALL IT?

CLONED BODY PARTS. THAT WAS ALL STAR WARS AND @#%*.

WHAT KINDA' MESSED UP FAMILY REUNION IS THIS?!

LOOK, I DON'T CARE HOW MANY OF THESE MOOKS YOU PULL OUTTA THE GROUND!

FAR AS I CAN SEE, I STILL SIT AT THE HEAD A' THIS TABLE, AND I STILL CALL THE *SHOTS!*

THINK AGAIN, BABY BRUNO.

THUD

WHA?

WHAT IS THIS?

THUD

WHAT THE @#*% IS THIS?!

THUD

BUONA SERA, BRUNO. COME VA?

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN A GHOST.

SILVERMANE!

DON MANFREDI! FORGIVE ME. BUT HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?!

THE MAGGIA HAS EMPLOYED A *SPECIALIST* OVER THE YEARS.

SOMEONE WHO'S HELPED OUR BOYS PULL THESE "DISAPPEARING ACTS" WHEN THE HEAT WAS ON.

NOW, WITH HIS HELP, AND THAT OF OUR "DEARLY DEPARTED," WE'RE GONNA RETURN THE MAGGIA TO ITS FORMER GLORY.

AIN'T THAT RIGHT, MYSTERIO?

PLEASE, MR. KARNELLI, CALL ME, MR. BECK.

AS IN "BECK" FROM THE DEAD. HA HA HA!

"WOW! THIS IS SOME PLACE YOU HAVE HERE..."

...I MEAN, I KNEW YOU JAMESONS WERE IN THE MONEY, BUT *THIS* IS...MONEY-MONEY.

JAY, HOW CAN YOU POSSIBLY AFFORD THIS?

WELL, I GUESS IT'S TIME TO LET YOU KNOW. I'VE MADE QUITE A NAME FOR MYSELF...

...A "*PEN NAME*" ACTUALLY.

WHOA! THIS IS *YOU*?! I HAD TO READ THIS IN HIGH SCHOOL! OH MY GOD!

WELL, WE'RE FAMILY NOW. I'M SURE I CAN TRUST YOU WITH MY SECRET IDENTITY.

WHAT?

SLAM

MAY! THERE YOU ARE. WELL I'VE LET PETER IN ON MY DOUBLE LIFE.

WHAT SAY WE SPLURGE A LITTLE AND GO SOMEWHERE NICE?

THAT SOUNDS *GREAT!*

I'M SURE IT DOES.

A WHOLE NEW MEAL TICKET FOR YOU TO *LEECH OFF*. GOD FORBID *YOU* TAKE *US* "*SOMEWHERE NICE.*"

OR THAT YOU HAVE TWO PENNIES TO RUB TOGETHER! OR FINISH *ONE THING* YOU'VE STARTED! WHAT ARE YOU *THIS* WEEK?

A PHOTOGRAPHER? A TEACHER?! *DRIVING SOME HACK?!* THE *YEARS* I'VE WASTED ON YOU! I'LL *TELL* YOU WHAT YOU ARE--

ONE DAMN BIG DISAPPOINTMENT!

I-I HAVE TO GO.

PETER, WAIT. DON'T--

LEAVE HIM, JAY.

SLAM

MAY? WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU? I'VE NEVER *SEEN* YOU LIKE THIS.

GET USED TO IT.

THE HONEYMOON'S OVER.

FIRE EXIT

GOTTA CLEAR MY HEAD. THAT--THAT WAS PAINFUL. I'VE BEEN PUNCHED BY THE HULK, AND I'M TELLIN' YA...

...THAT WAS A HUNDRED TIMES WORSE. THAT WAS WAY OUTTA LINE. THAT WAS...

...TOTALLY TRUE. WHAT *AM I* DOING WITH MY LIFE?

MetLift

COUPLE WEEKS AGO I BEAT DOC OCK IN A BATTLE OF THE *MINDS*. I OUT-BRAINBOXED OTTO OCTAVIUS!

ALL THAT POTENTIAL AND WHAT'VE I DONE WITH IT?

TALK ABOUT POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY!

A POLICE CONVOY?

THANK YOU, WORLD. I COULD USE A DISTRACTION ABOUT NOW!

HOPE NEW YORK'S FINEST DON'T MIND ME CUTTING IN.

'CAUSE, BOY, DO I WANT TO BEAT THE SNOT OUTTA SOMEBODY!

POLICE

THIS IS CAPTAIN WATANABE. WE'VE GOT REPORTS OF MULTIPLE SHOTS FIRED IN THE MEATPACKING DISTRICT...

...IN A GANG WAR BETWEEN THE MAGGIA AND MR. NEGATIVE'S TONG. I WANT CONFIRMATION FROM THE OFFICER CALLING THIS IN!

IT'S OFFICER CARLIE COOPER, MA'AM.

COOPER? YOU'RE A BODY-BAGGER! WHAT'RE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?!

IT'S ALL RIGHT, CAPTAIN...

YOU TWO-BIT LOSERS THOUGHT YOU COULD TAKE FROM THE MAGGIA?!

NO MORE! WE'RE BACK, PUNKS! BACK FROM THE MOTHER-LOVIN' GRAVE!

...I WAS CHECKING OUT A LEAD.

NO KIDDIN'? WHY DON'T WE MAKE THAT A RETURN TRIP?!

HAMMERHEAD?! JOSEPH? WHAT IN GOD'S NAME ARE YOU DOING WITH THESE GUYS?!

YOU'RE *MAGGIA!*

BOSS?

THAT YOU?

IT WAS THE MONEY, CAPTAIN. IT SMELLED LIKE FISH.

OR RATHER SOME OF THE PRESERVATIVES USED TO PACK FISH.

A QUICK CHECK AND I FOUND THERE WERE ONLY THREE PACKING PLANTS IN THE CITY USING THOSE CHEMICALS--

COOPER, WE'RE ALMOST THERE! SIT TIGHT AND LAY LOW!

I'M A TRAINED OFFICER, CAPTAIN. I CAN LOOK AFTER MYSELF JUST FINE--

YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE. WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE, NOW.

WHAT? WHO'S THERE? WHO'S--

AHH! NO...

...IT CAN'T BE. I SAW YOUR BODY. I WENT TO YOUR FUNERAL. YOU'RE-- YOU'RE--

NO, CARLIE. IT'S REALLY ME. I'M BACK.

DAD?!

Next Time:

MORE MOBSTERS, MYSTERIES, AND MAYHEM. AND THE MOST SHOCKING SPIDEY MOMENT OF THE YEAR! (YEAH, IT'S JANUARY, BUT WE FIGURED, WHY NOT BLOW OUR WAD EARLY?)

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #619

EVERYONE ON THE FORCE WILL TELL YOU: RAY COOPER WAS A GOOD COP.

PAST TENSE.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME, GEORGE. IF THERE'S A LEAD HERE, I'LL FIND IT.

THANKS, RAY. THIS MAN WAS OUR TOP MAGGIA INFORMANT.

WE OWE IT TO HIM TO CATCH WHOEVER DID THIS.

DAD? YOU FORGOT YOUR LUNCH.

ENOUGH SHOP TALK. I'VE GOT A VISITOR. HEY, CARLIE-BEAR.

MS. COOPER.

HI, YURI. JEAN. CAPTAIN STACY.

HEH.

CAPTAIN?

JUST THINKING. KIDS ARE SO DIFFERENT. MY DAUGHTER'S HER AGE. SHE'LL DROP BY THE STATION, BUT...

"...I CAN'T IMAGINE HER *EVER* SETTING FOOT IN THE *MORGUE*."

MMPH. THANKS.

HEY, IS THIS A SPIDER-MAN CASE?

DID THIS GUY GET HIS INSIDES TURNED INTO SAND OR ELECTRICITY OR SOMETHING?

NOPE. THIS WAS A MOB SLAYING.

OH.

DON'T BE LIKE THAT. THIS'S RIVETING STUFF.

DAAAD, STOP BEING WEIRD.

NAME: LOU COSSI

HONEY, WHERE YOU SEE A BODY, I HEAR A *STORY*.

HE'S TELLING IT TO ME RIGHT NOW. A JUICY ONE. A CRIME STORY.

AS A FORENSIC SCIENTIST, I'M ONE OF THE FEW WHO CAN HEAR IT.

AND TRUST ME, CARLIE, DEAD MEN...

"...TELL THE BEST STORIES."

YES, CARLIE-BEAR. I'M ALIVE. HONEST.

BUT YOU--YOU WERE DRIVING. YOU HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK. THERE WAS AN ACCIDENT--

I COULDN'T GET TO THE HOSPITAL IN TIME. I NEVER GOT TO SAY--

THE DOCTOR, HE PRONOUNCED YOU--

IT WAS SPECIAL EFFECTS, HONEY. THE BEST. GOOD ENOUGH TO FOOL ANYONE... EXCEPT A MEDICAL EXAMINER.

THE MAGGIA *NEEDED* ME TO PULL ALL THIS OFF. SOMEONE WHO KNEW THE SYSTEM, WHO COULD FAKE THE RECORDS AND--

NO! I DON'T *BELIEVE* YOU! YOU WOULD *NEVER*--

MY *FATHER* WOULD NEVER BE A PART OF *ANYTHING* LIKE THAT! HE WAS A--

NEEE

HAMMERHEAD!

YOU NO-GOOD RAT!

DON MANFREDI? SILVIO?

I SAW YOU DIE....

MYSTERIOSO PART 2

RE-APPEARING ACT

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JAVIER RODRIGUEZ
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VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letterer

TOM BRENNAN
underboss

STEPHEN WACKER
in cement

TOM BREVOORT
boss

JOE QUESADA
editor in chief

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
executive producer

HAMMERHEAD?! SNAP OUT OF IT!

I DUNNO... THIS ISN'T RIGHT. THIS'S ALL...

AFTER ALL I'VE DONE FOR YOU! YOU SELL YOUR *LOYALTY* TO *OUTSIDERS?*

YOU TURN ON *FAMILY?!* IS *THIS* HOW YOU *RESPECT* ME, JOSEPH?!

STOP IT! ALL OF YOU--

--GET OUTTA MY HEAD!

WHOA! COMMON SENSE TINGLING!

SOMETHING TELLS ME I'M AT THE RIGHT PLACE.

HEY, PLUMB-SKULL! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

PFT

TEP

THERE, THAT SHOULD MAKE SURE I DON'T LOSE YOU WHILE I--

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, SPIDER-MAN.

FOR THE LUVVA--LOOK, CAN WE DO THE WHOLE "*TRY TO ARREST SPIDEY*" THING SOME OTHER TIME? I GOTTA GO AFTER THE BAD GUY.

NO, YOU DON'T. YOU GOT A SPIDER-TRACER ON HIM. CATCH HIM *LATER*. RIGHT NOW...

...I'VE GOT A DOZEN OFFICERS ABOUT TO WALK INTO A FIREFIGHT AND ONE ALREADY ON THE SCENE. WE COULD REALLY USE YOUR HELP.

SAY, I KNOW YOU!

CAPTAIN YURI WATANABE. WE'VE MET.

SO CAP, WHERE'S ALL THIS SPIDEY-TRUST COMING FROM? NOT THAT I MIND.

I CAME UP THROUGH THE RANKS WITH JEAN DEWOLFF. SHE SPOKE WELL OF YOU.

A LOT.

OH, THAT DOES IT. YOU'RE GETTING A FRIEND REQUEST. YOU ON FACEBOOK OR MYSPACE?

UM... MYSPACE.

ARE YOU *SEEING* THIS?!

ASM #600--STEVE.

"THAT'S SILVERMANE...

"THERE'S VINCENZO KARNELLI, PAULO MUNOZ...

"...AND A DOZEN MAGGIA FOOTSOLDIERS WHO ARE SUPPOSED TO BE *DEAD!*

"AND ALL THE MEN FROM MR. NEGATIVE'S TONG...

"...THEY'RE SHAKING OFF GUNSHOT WOUNDS?!"

UNDEAD MOBSTERS? MASKED MEN WHO WON'T DIE?! THIS'S *INSANE!*

WELCOME TO *MY* WORLD. JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD.

ALL RIGHT! EVERYONE, **FREEZE!**

THIS'S THE NYPD! *YOU'RE ALL UNDER ARREST!*

NYPD

WHAT NOW, BOSS?

CHANGE OF PLANS, BOYS. IF NEGATIVE'S FREAKS CAN'T BE KILLED...

...CRIPPLE 'EM INSTEAD!

HOW? THEY KEEP GETTING BACK ON THEIR FEET!

THAT'S IT RIGHT THERE, JIMMY.

IT'S LIKE THE SAME WAY YOU TAKE ON AN ARMORED CAR...

...SHOOT OUT THE TIRES!

BLOW OFF THEIR ***FEET*** AND THEY WON'T HAVE NOTHING TO STAND ON! ALL A' YOU, GO FOR THEIR LEGS!

GOOD ADVICE. ME, ON THE OTHER HAND...

HUH?

...I GO FOR THE HEADSHOT. WORKS ***EVERY*** TIME.

ESPECIALLY ON GUYS IN BATTLE SUITS WITH ***EXPOSED CHINS***. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?

D'YOU TELL THE GUY AT THE ARMOR STORE, *"GIVE ME PROTECTION EVERYWHERE BUT MY FACE"*?

ARHH!

BOOM

BOOM

BOOM

DON'T REALLY SEE THE POINT A' THIS.

THEY'RE JUST GONNA GROW THE DAMN THINGS BACK.

YEAH? AND BY THE TIME THEY'VE DONE THAT, WE'LL BE LONG GONE.

THE COPS'LL HAVE ROUNDED 'EM UP. TOSSED 'EM IN CELLS.

AAAND?

GNHH...

AND THEY'LL BE OUT OF OUR HAIR. NOT BAD. THAT SILVERMANE'S A SMART GUY.

YEAH. A LOT BETTER THAN BABY BRUNO, THAT'S FOR SURE!

I KNEW EVERYTHING WOULD WORK OUT ONCE I GOT ***CONTROL*** OF THE MAGGIA...

...EVEN IF IT IS ***REMOTE*** CONTROL. HEY, BECK...

...HOW'S OUR "PUPPET DICTATOR" HOLDING UP? CAN'T HAVE YOUR SILVERMANE ROBOT BREAKING DOWN ON ME.

SURE, IT'S GOOD AGAINST THE COPS AND MR. NEGATIVE'S BOYS. BUT WHAT ABOUT SPIDER-MAN?

MR. KARNELLI, I'M *MYSTERIO*. I *ALWAYS* PLAN FOR SPIDER-MAN.

LISTEN UP, CREW! PLACES FOR GAG SEVENTEEN.

LOU, YOU'RE TAKING POINT ON THIS ONE.

HEY!

I'VE GOT THE WALL-CRAWLER IN POSITION.

PUTTING HIM INTO PLAY. **NOW!**

WE ONLY GET ONE TAKE AT THIS. MAKE IT COUNT!

AH!

BRRRRTTTTT

FIRING ON ME? REALLY?

THIS'S THE THANKS I GET...

...FOR SAVING YOU MAGGIA GUYS THE OTHER DAY.

THOUGHT YOU WERE ON OUR SIDE!

NAH. YOU'RE ALL JUST CROOKS TO ME. AND I'M HERE TO STOP A GANG WAR.

POK

THAT MEANS YOU'RE ALL GOING DOWN!

WHAT?!

NYPD

WAIT! I DIDN'T--

KRAK

PULL OUT, BOYS!

THAT MASKED FREAK'S OUTTA CONTROL! THERE'S NO MORE PERCENTAGE HERE.

TALK TO ME. TELL ME HOW HE'S--

HE'S DEAD.

THERE'S NO WAY I... I COULDN'T HAVE.

NO! HE CAN'T BE.

I'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR YEARS. I KNOW HOW HARD TO HIT A NORMAL GUY...

WHAT'RE YOU STANDING AROUND FOR?!

I WANT NEGATIVE'S MEN LOCKED UP *NOW!*

NYPD

CAPTAIN, WHAT ABOUT *HIM?*

WHAT? SPIDER-MAN? HE'S TOO FAST.

YOU'D NEVER BE ABLE TO CATCH HIM. AND BESIDES...

...HE'S ALREADY OFF CHASING AFTER THOSE MOB GUYS.

NYPD

NEVER MEANT TO...

I SAID, HE'S TOO FAST. AND HE'S *ALREADY OFF* CHASING AFTER THOSE MOB GUYS.

UM... YEAH. RIGHT.

CAPTAIN! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS HERE! A BLUE WALL A' SILENCE IS ONE THING--

--A *RED AND BLUE* WALL OF SILENCE IS SOMETHING ELSE! THE MAN'S A VIGILANTE *AND* A KILLER!

NO, HE'S NOT. NOT EVEN ON HIS WORST DAY.

BUT CAPTAIN! LOOK!

I DON'T CARE. I'VE SEEN A *LOT* OF THINGS TONIGHT I CAN'T BELIEVE. THIS? THIS I *WON'T* BELIEVE.

BLOCK OFF THE AREA. NOBODY TOUCH ANYTHING TILL THE C.S.I.S GET HERE. AND SOMEBODY FIND ME CARLIE COOPER.

SHE'S AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE. WE WERE IN CONTACT TILL HER MIKE CUT OUT.

I DIDN'T WANT TO SPRING ALL OF THIS ON YOU AT ONCE.

BUT I HAD TO WARN YOU BEFORE THIS BECAME A CRIME SCENE...

DAD, WAIT.

WATANABE'S LOOKING FOR ME. IF SHE FINDS YOU...

CAPTAIN?

THERE YOU ARE, COOPER. I KNOW I CHEWED YOU OFF A PIECE EARLIER. BUT I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE NOW.

I NEED YOU TO BABY-SIT A BODY FROM ON-SITE ALL THE WAY TO THE MORGUE.

SOMETHING HINKY'S GOING ON, AND I WANT TO GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT.

WHO'S THE VIC?

NOT IMPORTANT. IT'S THE PERP. DOZEN EYEWITNESSES, MYSELF INCLUDED, MAKE SPIDEY FOR THIS ONE.

PROVE ME WRONG, COOPER. LAST THING THIS DEPARTMENT NEEDS IS ANOTHER FALSE CHARGE AGAINST SPIDER-MAN.

OH, MY... CAPTAIN, I KNOW THIS MAN. I'VE SEEN THIS CORPSE YEARS AGO...

...DOWN IN THE MORGUE. THIS IS--

--UN-FRICKIN' BELIEVABLE.

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT. WHILE I WAS OFF ON MY HONEYMOON...

YOU, AND MY GOOD-FOR-NOTHING RELATIONS, MOVE INTO MY HOUSE IN QUEENS...

...AND YOU *TORCH* IT?!

IT WASN'T OUR FAULT, AUNT MAY, THERE WAS THIS SUPER VILLAIN*, HE BROKE IN AND--

SELL IT TO SOMEONE WHO GIVES A DAMN. *LOOK* AT THIS PLACE!

I SWEAR, HARRY OSBORN, I'M GOING TO SUE YOUR PAMPERED, TRUST FUND BUTT FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT.

MAY, PLEASE. I'M SORRY. I ONLY CAME HERE BECAUSE I HAD NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.

TELL ME HOW THAT'S *MY* PROBLEM? ALL OF YOU, END OF THE WEEK, *YOU'RE OUT!*

BUT WHERE WILL WE--?

*ASM #608 - #610--STEVE.

THERE'S ALWAYS PLENTY OF COTS DOWN AT THE SHELTER.

SLAM

HARRY? IS SHE SERIOUS? YOU EVAH SEE HER LIKE THIS?

NEVER, AMES. NOT ONCE.

TRUST ME, YOU HAVE YET TO SEE THE FULL EXTENT OF MY DARK SIDE.

CLIC

ARGHH!

THIS IS BUT A TASTE OF THE PAIN I CAN INFLICT ON YOU, HAMMERHEAD.

IT'S AN OBEDIENCE DEVICE I HAD DR. TRAMMA PLACE INSIDE YOUR REBUILT FRAME.

I HOPE IT HELPS YOU CLARIFY WHERE YOUR LOYALTIES SHOULD LIE.

YEAH, THINGS ARE CLEAR NOW. PAINFULLY CLEAR.

GOOD. NOW TO THE MATTER AT HAND. WE SHOULD-- WAIT! YOU'VE BEEN MARKED BY THE SPIDER.

KREK

AH, SPIDER-MAN. THE ITCH THAT REFUSES TO BE SCRATCHED TO DEATH

FORTUNATELY, I ALREADY POSSESS THE REMEDY.

"FOR SOME PEOPLE, TAKING A LIFE IS SO EASY..."

HOW DO GUYS LIKE WOLVERINE DO IT? HOW DO YOU CROSS THAT LINE AND KEEP GOING?

I'M NOT WIRED FOR THIS. I'M NOT SOME SOLDIER LIKE FLASH. OR EVEN A TRAINED COP.

I'M JUST A GUY FROM QUEENS WHO GOT BIT BY A STUPID, RADIOACTIVE SPIDER.

FOCUS, PETE. THAT SECURITY GATE. SOMETHING TORE IT RIGHT OFF ITS HINGES.

SOMETHING WITH SUPER-STRENGTH?

LIKE MAYBE A CERTAIN BACK-FROM-THE-DEAD, CYBORG MOB BOSS?

CHECK IT OUT. HE'S TAKING THE BAIT. WHAT NOW?

NOW I'LL SET HIM DOWN A DARK AND TWISTED PATH...

"...SOMETHING THAT WILL TAKE HIM RIGHT OVER THE EDGE-- AND BREAK HIM.

"SECOND LOCATION? IT'S SHOWTIME!"

YOW. SPIDER-SENSE.

LET ME HELP YOU WITH THAT.

I CAN PUT AN END TO THAT ANNOYING SPIDER-SENSE ONCE AND FOR ALL.

BOYS, LET'S SHOW THIS WEB-HEADED FREAK WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU MESS WITH THE MAGGIA.

THE BIG MAN?!

FRANKY, LIGHT THIS LOSER UP!

BRTTTTT

C'MON! REALLY? IT'S GONNA TAKE MORE THAN THAT MASK AND A GOOFY HAT...

THWIP

...TO MAKE ME BUY THAT THE BIG MAN'S BACK. TREAT ME WITH A LITTLE RESPECT HERE.

BRTTTTT!

URRH!

FRANKY! LET GO OF THE--!!

NO!

BLAM BLAM

KPOW KPOW

NOT AGAIN! THEY'RE ALL--

-KAFF- -KOFF-

YOU! YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!

TELL ME! WHAT'S GOING ON!

-KAFF-

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLAYING AT, BUT YOU ARE *NOT* FREDERICK FOSWELL! I SAW HIM DIE...

FOSWELL WAS NEVER THE BIG MAN. -KOFF-- HE WAS A FRONT.

SOMEONE THAT COULD PROVIDE--*-KAFF-*-- ME WITH AN ALIBI...

...BUT IT WAS ME, SON. -KOFF- IT WAS ALWAYS ME.

CAPTAIN STACY?!

AHH!

NO! NO! NO!

NOT BUYING IT!

NOT FOR ONE SECOND!

STOP IT!

GEORGE STACY? THE BIG MAN? A DIRTY COP WORKING FOR THE MAGGIA?

AND WITH ALL THE OTHER *IMPOSSIBLE* THINGS THAT'VE HAPPENED TODAY?

YOU JUST TIPPED YOUR HAND! *I KNOW YOU'RE BEHIND THIS NOW!*

PLEASE! THIS WASN'T MY IDEA! I--

SHUT UP! I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU!

I'M TALKING TO THE GUY WHO'S FILMING, WATCHING, AND GETTING HIS JOLLIES FROM EVERY MINUTE OF THIS.

YOU WENT TOO FAR THIS TIME, MYSTERIO! NOW IT'S PERSONAL!

BECK?

THIS DOESN'T CHANGE A THING. HE'S RILED. HE'S ANGRY. HE'LL BE OFF HIS GAME.

I AM STILL IN CONTROL.

Name: Lou Cossi

CARLIE.

HEY, SPIDEY.

I HAVE TO KNOW. WHAT DID THE AUTOPSY SHOW? DID I *KILL* THAT MAN?

I DIDN'T PERFORM AN AUTOPSY. IF I HAD...*THAT* WOULD'VE KILLED HIM.

WHAT?

HE ISN'T DEAD. EVEN NOW. HE'S BEEN GIVEN A DRUG THAT MAKES IT LOOK LIKE--

I COULD'VE KILLED HIM. THAT'S HOW THEY GOT MY FATHER INVOLVED IN THIS.

YOUR FATHER?

IT STARTED OFF WITH BLOOD ON HIS HANDS, THEN IT MOVED ON TO...OTHER THINGS.

HE FAKED HIS OWN DEATH AS WELL. HE CAME BACK TO WARN ME SO IT WOULDN'T HAPPEN TO ME TOO.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

FOR STARTERS, PLAY SMART. THIS GUY, HE MIGHT NOT EVEN BE YOUR DAD...

...BUT WHOEVER HE IS, HE'S OUR BIGGEST LINK TO WHAT'S GOING ON. SO IF HE GETS IN TOUCH WITH YOU AGAIN....

...I'M GONNA NEED A FAVOR. A BIG ONE.

"THEY KEEP TRACKIN' US DOWN. KNOW HOW...?"

IT'S THE MONEY. IT'S ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT THE MONEY.

I COULD A' TOLD YOU THAT.

SHUT UP.

=SNICKER=

NEGATIVE'S BEEN HITTING OUR STASH HOUSES. HE FIGURES IF HE TAKES ALL OUR CAPITAL, OUR ORGANIZATION FALLS.

BUT WE TURNED THE TABLES, WE LED HIM TO THE LAST SPOT. AND HE PAID FOR IT WITH MOST OF HIS FANCY MUSCLE.

HE'S GONNA BE WISE TO US NOW. SO ONE STORE ROOM FULL A' CASH AIN'T GONNA DO IT. WE NEED TO SWEETEN THE HONEYPOT.

HUH?

WE PUT *ALL* OUR MONEY IN *ONE* LOCATION--

THAT'S *NOT* THE PLAN!

QUIET! YOUR DON IS TALKING.

YOU! YOU'RE *NOT* THE DON OF THIS FAMILY! YOU'RE JUST--

GAKK

SNAP

HEY! HE KILLED CARMINE!

GOTCHA.

THIS'S JUST ANOTHER FAKE DEATH. HE'S PERFECTLY FINE.

HA. GOOD ONE, BOSS. YOU REALLY HAD US.

NAH. I'M JUST MESSIN' WITH YOU. HE'S *DEAD!*

BUT MAYBE NOW YOU'LL ALL REMEMBER...

...WHO REALLY PULLS ALL THE STRINGS AROUND HERE!

To Be Continued...

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #620

NOW WHAT I LIKE ABOUT ORGANIZED CRIME? IT'S VERY MUCH A CASH-IN-HAND KIND OF BUSINESS.

FROM PROTECTION...

...TO PROSTITUTION...

...TO NARCOTICS...

...IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY.

SO YOU HAVE TO ASK YOURSELF, WHERE DOES IT ALL GO?

WELL, IN THE CASE OF THE MAGGIA CRIME FAMILY, IT'S JUST BEEN SITTING THERE.

FOR MONTHS, A RIVAL MOB BOSS, MR. NEGATIVE, HAS BEEN CHIPPING AWAY AT THEIR LEGITIMATE HOLDINGS...

...LEAVING THEM NO WAY TO LAUNDER ALL OF THEIR DIRTY SWAG.

FORCING THEM TO MOVE IT FROM ONE STASH HOUSE TO THE NEXT...

...TILL TONIGHT, WHERE IT ALL WINDS UP HERE...

...AT THE OLD EMPYREAN OPERA HOUSE.

THE MAGGIA THINKS WE'RE DOING THIS TO BAIT NEGATIVE INTO A TRAP.

THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL. THAT'S MISDIRECTION. WITH ME IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT MISDIRECTION.

MYSTERIO

PART 3
SMOKE & MIRRORS

STORY	ART	COLORS
DAN SLOTT	MARCOS JAVIER MARTIN PULIDO RODRÍGUEZ PAGES 1-2 13-22 PAGES 3-12	JAVIER

LETTERS	ASST. EDITOR	EXECUTIVE EDITOR	EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
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PUBLISHER	EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
DAN BUCKLEY	ALAN FINE

WEBHEADS
GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS

THEY CALL ME QUENTIN BECK, THE ONE AND ONLY MYSTERIO.

OR MAYBE THE REAL BECK IS DEAD? I WOULDN'T TRUST ME ON THIS. I LIE ABOUT EVERYTHING.

...SO WITH THE FIRST HIT, THEY'RE GONNA SEE MY BLOOD N' GUTS GOIN' EVERYWHERE?

YEAH. THAT SHOULD GIVE YOU A SECOND TO GET THE DROP ON 'EM.

BOSS, I GOTTA ASK...

WHY'RE WE TAKING THE TIME TO RIG THESE GUYS FOR *FAKE* DEATHS WHEN...

...WHEN THEY'RE ALL GOING TO DIE ANYWAY?

BECAUSE IT'S BETTER TO HAVE THE MARKS THINK THAT THEY'RE **PLAYERS**...

"...INSTEAD OF THE ONES GETTING *PLAYED*."

THANKS FOR MEETING ME HERE ON SUCH SHORT--

I'M NOT FALLING FOR THIS.

CARLIE-BEAR?

STOP SAYING THAT. DO I LOOK *STUPID* TO YOU? MY LATE FATHER, THE MAN I MODELED MY LIFE AFTER...

...SHOWS UP TO TELL ME THAT EVERYTHING I KNOW IS A LIE.

THAT HE WAS A DIRTY COP--WORKING WITH MYSTERIO--TO FAKE THE DEATHS OF KEY MEMBERS OF THE MOB?

YOU SAY THAT, AND ALL I HEAR IS "*MYSTERIO*," "*FAKE*," AND "DEATH." PROVE TO ME YOU'RE *RAY COOPER! RIGHT NOW!*

IT WAS BECAUSE OF YOUR MOM, HONEY. YOU REMEMBER? SHE'D GOTTEN SO ILL.

A COP'S SALARY, WHAT INSURANCE WE HAD, THEY COULDN'T PAY FOR ALL HER TREATMENTS. AND WHEN SHE PASSED AWAY...

...I FELT OUR FAMILY DIDN'T OWE THE SYSTEM ANY LOYALTY. IF ANYTHING, I WAS GOING TO MAKE IT WORK FOR US!

THAT'S WHY I CAME BACK. MYSTERIO'S BIG PAYDAY IS COMING, AND THIS IS WHEN I GET MY CUT.

ENOUGH TO BUY THIS FAMILY A FUTURE WE DESERVE! YOU AND ME.

BUT IF YOU'D RATHER NOT...

DAD!

WAIT! DON'T GO, OKAY?

EASY, CARLIE-BEAR. THIS'LL WORK, YOU'LL SEE. I WON'T BE LONG.

YOU BETTER NOT. THERE'S NO WAY I'M LOSING YOU AGAIN.

BRRRP BRRRP

WHOA! I KNOW THAT RINGTONE...

CARLIE! HEY, I'M SORRY ABOUT LUNCH THE OTHER DAY, I WAS--

WHATEVER. LOOK, PETE, YOU KNOW SPIDER-MAN, RIGHT? WELL I NEED YOU TO GET A MESSAGE TO HIM.

WAIT. YOU DID HIM A FAVOR? WHAT DOES *THAT* MEAN?

LIKE I DON'T KNOW.

I'M SORRY, PETER, BUT THAT'S BETWEEN SPIDEY AND ME. IN FACT...

...WHEN IT COMES TO YOU AND ME, I DON'T KNOW IF THERE IS A "YOU AND ME." I'M DONE BEING YOUR GO-TO-GAL.

I'VE SEEN THE WAY YOU USE YOUR "FRIENDS," PETER. WE'RE JUST... RESOURCES TO YOU, AREN'T WE?

THINGS YOU USE TO GET WHAT YOU WANT. SERIOUSLY...

"...WHO TREATS PEOPLE LIKE THAT?"

WHAT IS HAMMERHEAD'S STATUS, DR. TRAMMA?

YOU USED HIS OBEDIENCE PROTOCOLS A LITTLE TOO VIGOROUSLY, MR. NEGATIVE. HIS NERVOUS SYSTEM'S FRIED.

I WANT HIM READY FOR THE FINAL ASSAULT.

THIS ISN'T LENSCRAFTERS. I'M REBUILDING NEURAL PATHWAYS. HE'LL BE READY WHEN HE'S READY.

VERY WELL. MEN...

...LOAD UP THE CANISTERS OF DEVIL'S BREATH. THEY SHOULD KEEP SPIDER-MAN FROM INTERFERING IN THESE AFFAIRS.

IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, IF *SILVERMANE* HAS RETURNED, I WANT *NOTHING* STANDING IN THE WAY BETWEEN HIM...

...AND MY WELL DESERVED VENGEANCE.

SEE MR. NEGATIVE #1-#3--STEVE.

SIR, IT'S OUR INFORMANT AT THE POLICE PRECINCT. ON THE SECURE LINE.

HE'S LEARNED THE LOCATION OF THE MAGGIA'S STASH HOUSE.

WHERE IS IT, OFFICER?

YO! YOU KNOW THE DRILL, FIRST YOU GOTTA PAY UP.

YOUR FEE IS BEING WIRED TO YOUR ANONYMOUS ACCOUNT. NOW OUT WITH IT.

THE OLD EMPYREAN THEATER THAT'S PRETTY CLOSE TO WHERE YOU ARE NOW, HUH?

CLICK

THE FINAL PIECE IS SET IN MOTION AND I'M GETTING PAID FOR IT.

CUT, PRINT, AND PUT THAT ON THE COMPILATION REEL. THAT'S A KEEPER!

VERY PROUD OF YOURSELF, AREN'T YOU?

CLAP

CLAP

AND OF YOU, MR. COOPER. YOU WEREN'T ACTUALLY COUNTING YOUR TAKE.

YOU WERE CHECKING FOR ANY OF MY BUGS, TRICKS, OR TRAPS, WEREN'T YOU?

WHEN DEALING WITH YOU...

...IT PAYS TO BE CAUTIOUS. OH, JUST SO YOU KNOW...

...IF ANYTHING *SHOULD* HAPPEN TO ME...

ZZIP

...A TIME SENSITIVE FILE GOES OUT TO A MAJOR NEWS SITE WITH DETAILS OF EVERY FAKE DEATH WE ENGINEERED.

I DOUBT YOUR CLIENTS WOULD BE *HAPPY* ABOUT THAT.

PLEASE, LIKE I'M THE KIND OF GUY WHO'D PULL A DOUBLE CROSS.

HERE YOU GO, BOSS. WE GOT THAT C-4 READY.

RIIIGHT. BEFORE I GO, TELL ME SOMETHING.

YOU WIPE OUT THE MAGGIA, PIN IT ON NEGATIVE, AND LEAVE WITH THE CASH. I GET THAT.

BUT RIGHT NOW, *YOU* CONTROL "*SILVERMANE*." YOU'RE RUNNING A CRIMINAL EMPIRE. WHY PLAY THE SHORT GAME?

TWO REASONS, RAY. ONE: PULLING OFF THE GAG. THAT'S MY RUSH, NOT THE DAY-TO-DAY STUFF.

AND TWO: THERE'S ONLY SO LONG YOU CAN KEEP A CON GOING BEFORE SOME RANDOM VARIABLE SHOWS UP AND RUINS EVERYTH--

BEEP BEEP

INTRUDER

SEE? HE'S EARLY. NOW HOW ON EARTH DID HE FIND THIS PLACE?

WELL, I KNOW A CUE TO LEAVE WHEN I HEAR ONE. G'LUCK WITH THIS, QUENTIN.

TEAMS, TO THE SOUTH ENTRANCE! WE HAVE A VISITOR! *OPEN FIRE!*

KEEP HIM BUSY TILL OUR "GUESTS" SHOW UP!

LINK

SPITT

SPITT

SPL

YOW! WELL EXCUSE ME FOR BARGING IN.

DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE ENTERTAINING.

RRRT BLAMMM

BLAMMM BRRRRT BLAMMM

SPEAKING OF ENTERTAINING...

...I'M HAVING A HARD TIME FIGURING OUT WHAT'S *REAL* HERE AND WHAT'S FOR SHOW.

WITH MYSTERIO, YOU CAN NEVER TELL. ARE YOU MOBSTERS OR EXTRAS?

'CAUSE IF YOU'RE JUST HERE TO GET POINTS ON YOUR EQUITY CARDS, I CAN PULL MY--

NOW MY SPIDER-SENSE SAYS THOSE *AREN'T* BLANKS!

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU GUYS?

ARGHH!

SPLURCH

HURHK!

SPLATT

EWW! REALLY?!

I KNOW IT'S FAKE, BUT STILL! YUCK, THAT'S GROSS!

YA GOT US.

IT WAS THE ENTRAILS, WASN'T IT? LI'L OVER THE TOP, RIGHT?

JUST GREAT. STAGE BLOOD OR NOT...

...THIS BETTER WASH OUT OF MY TIGHTS!

BRRR

SHUT U-KK!
MUPPET HEAD KICK! HEE-YA!
SPIDER-SENSE! WHAT NOW?
OH! COMPANY'S HERE!
MR. NEGATIVE? IT'S BEEN AGES! WHAT'VE YOU BEEN UP TO?
RRRAHHHHHHHH
ACTUALLY, SPIDER-MAN, I'VE BEEN PREPARING A SPECIAL GIFT. JUST FOR YOU.
I HOPE YOU REMEMBER THE DEVIL'S BREATH.
MADE FROM THE RAREST AND MOST COSTLY INGREDIENTS.
INCLUDING HALF A VIAL OF YOUR BLOOD.
THAT'S NEGATIVE'S POISON GAS! THE STUFF THAT TARGETS SPECIFIC DNA!
OH, MAN! ONE WHIFF OF THAT AND IT'S GOODBYE, SPIDEY!
HAAA!
WRAP THIS UP FAST, PARKER!
AND WHATEVER YOU DO...
ZZZZAW
...DON'T BREATHE!
IT APPEARS I'VE ACCOMPLISHED THE IMPOSSIBLE.
I PUT AN END TO YOUR INCESSANT BABBLING! HA HA!
KEEP IT UP. IF I DON'T PASS OUT AND DIE, YOU ARE SO GONNA PAY FOR THAT!

ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE'S IN PLACE. IT'S SHOWTIME.
DANIEL, HAS ALL THE MAGGIA'S MONEY BEEN SWAPPED OUT FOR COUNTERFEIT BILLS?
YES, SIR.
GETAWAY VEHICLE'S READY?
FUELED AND DOCKED.
VERY GOOD.
OH, FRANCIS, IN CASE THE WALL-CRAWLER ESCAPES-- THAT GAS WAS FREAKING HIM OUT.
SWITCH MY SMOKE BOMBS FROM GREEN TO RED, AND PREP GAG THIRTY-TWO.
NICE ONE, BOSS.
FIRE IN THE HOLE.
ALL I NEED NOW IS A VOLUNTEER FROM THE AUDIENCE.
SILVERMANE! I'VE WAITED A LONG TIME FOR THIS!
PERFECT.
SO YOU'RE NEGATIVE! THE FREAK FROM CHINATOWN WHO THINKS HE CAN MOVE IN ON MY TERRITORY!
I BEEN DYIN' TO GET MY HANDS ON YOU!

YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME, DO YOU? I DON'T CARE.

ALL THAT MATTERS IS THAT I'M THE LAST THING YOU'LL EVER SEE.

KLUNK

AGHH! WHAT-WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

THERE'S A-A-A-BREACH--

--IN MY P-P-POWER SUPPLY!

I LIVE FOR THIS! NOTHING BEATS A GOOD DEATH SCENE!

CAN'T CON-CON-CON--

GOD, I'M GOOD.

--CONTAIN IT!

Y'KNOW IT'S A SHAME...

...THAT SUPER VILLAINS DON'T GIVE OUT AWARDS FOR THIS STUFF.

NO!

SPIDER-SENSE JUST KICKED INTO HIGH GEAR! GOTTA GET EVERYONE OUT OF HERE-- FAST!

BUT I CAN'T EVEN YELL OUT! THERE'S NO WAY TO WARN 'EM! WHAT AM I GONNA DO?!!

COOPER? WHY ARE YOU HERE? WE DIDN'T CALL FOR FORENSICS.

CAPTAIN, WHAT'RE YOUR MEN DOING OUTSIDE? GUNSHOTS'VE BEEN REPORTED. IF THE GANG WAR'S IN THERE--

THEN IT'S IN A SECLUDED AREA. NO CIVILIANS AT RISK. I'M NOT PUTTING ANY OF MY MEN IN HARM'S WAY. WE WAIT FOR SPECIAL OPS.

BUT I KNOW SOME PEOPLE IN THERE! YOU HAVE TO--

NYPD

KRRRASH

SPIDER-MAN?!

BUT HE'S ALONE! HE'S THE ONLY ONE WHO--

HUUHHH!

SPIDEY! THE MAN YOU WERE FOLLOWING IS HE--WAS HE--

HUH-HUH- HE WASN'T IN THERE. *HUH.* I DIDN'T SEE HIM.

WHO ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? WHO *WAS* IN THERE?

NEGATIVE'S MEN. MAGGIA. A SILVERMANE MUPPET. GIMME A SEC TO CATCH MY BREATH...

...THEN I'M GOIN' BACK IN. PLACE IS FLOODED WITH DEVIL'S BREATH. A POISON DESIGNED TO KILL ME--AND ONLY ME.

I REMEMBER IT, FROM THE VANDAMEER MASSACRE! I WAS ONE OF THE FIRST ON THE SCENE.

HERE. ALL UNITS CARRY HAZMAT GEAR. THIS SHOULD HELP...

YPD

ASM #548--STEVE.

THIS'S A *LOT* OF SCRATCH, BOSS. WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO WITH IT ALL?

DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BOYS. BUT I'M GONNA BUY AN ISLAND IN THE TROPICS...

...WHERE I'LL SIT UNDER PALM TREES AND DRINK THINGS OUTTA COCONUTS. THAT'S THE PLAN.

NOT HAPPENING, FISHBOWL! YOU JUST KILLED A LOT OF PEOPLE BACK THERE!

THERE'S ONLY TWO PLACES YOU'RE GOING STRAIGHT TO JAIL OR BACK IN THE GROUND!

C'MON, WEB-HEAD. ADMIT IT. YOU MISSED ME.

HOW'D YOU DO IT, BECK? HOW'RE YOU NOT DEAD?!

I DUNNO. MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING TO DO WITH BEING A MASTER OF ILLUSION. DUH!

WHSSSH

THUD

ACTUALLY, I'VE BEEN AROUND FOR SOME TIME. YOU JUST DIDN'T KNOW IT.

ALL THESE LITTLE THINGS THAT'RE ***WRONG*** WITH YOUR LIFE...

...THE LIVING WHO SHOULD BE DEAD. THE DEAD WHO APPEAR TO BE LIVING.

IT'S ALL BEEN ME. MESSING WITH YOU. FOR ALL THE TIMES YOU MESSED WITH ME.

THOK

NO! I'M ***NOT*** FALLING FOR ***ANY*** OF THIS!

KRAK

HUHHH AKK HAKK KAFF

GIVE IT UP, MYSTERIO.

THE DEVIL'S BREATH ONLY TARGETS SOMEONE WITH *MY DNA.*

YES... SH-SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU... KAFF...ALL THIS TIME...I WAS... REALLY...

...YOUR *COUSIN!*

WHAT THE--?!

GNYEAH!

PSYCH!

TAG

GROING

AH AH AHHH...

SUNNUVA BISCUIT!

I SWEAR WE SHOULD GIVE OUT AWARDS...

KREEEEEEK

K R O M

COME. IT WILL TAKE THE AUTHORITIES TIME TO SIFT THROUGH THIS MESS. BY THEN WE'LL BE LONG GONE.

C-CAN'T MOVE.

SEVER WHATEVER PARTS OF YOU ARE BROKEN OR TRAPPED. YOU ARE MY INNER-DEMONS. YOU CANNOT DIE.

THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID FOR THE MAGGIA.

AND WHILE I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO ADD THEIR COFFERS TO MY OWN...IT DOESN'T MATTER.

THEY'RE GONE, SILVERMANE IS DEAD BY MY HAND, AND THE SPIDER HAS FINALLY LEARNED HIS PLACE. ALL IN ALL? THIS WAS A GOOD DAY.

EASY, CAPTAIN. WE GO IN WHEN THE CHIEF SAYS IT'S SECURE.

I DOUBT ANYONE'S GETTING OUT OF THERE. LET US DO OUR JOBS, CAPTAIN.

BUT THEY COULD BE--

F.D.N.Y

JUST 'CAUSE SPIDEY DIDN'T SEE HIM, DOESN'T MEAN HE WASN'T IN THERE. HOW DO I KNOW IF HE'S--

BZZZZZ

C-BEAR, READY 2 GO. WHERE R U?

YOU HEARD ME, PEOPLE. LOCK IT DOWN.

IF WE CAN'T GO IN, SURE AS HELL NOTHING'S GETTING OUT! C'MON, I'M RUNNIN' A TIGHT SHIP HERE!

WHOOOO

AND THAT'S HOW YOU DO IT. THE OL' SLOW BOAT GETAWAY. Y'SMELL THAT, BOYS?

SMELLS LIKE A GARBAGE BARGE, BOSS.

NAH. THAT'S THE SWEET SMELL A' SUCCESS.

BUCHANAN

THWIP

MR. BECK'S VERY OWN CASH FOR TRASH PROGRAM.

NO KIDDIN'? HOW MUCH YOU THINK I'LL GET FOR A BIG OL' LIFE-SIZE PIECE OF GARBAGE...

...ONCE I FOLD IT IN HALF AND STUFF IT IN A LANDFILL?!

SPIDER-MAN! DON'T YOU EVER STOP?!

NOT NOW. YOU KILLED A LOT OF MEN TODAY, BECK. YOU'RE GOING DOWN.

THEY WERE *MAGGIA! THEY* WERE THE GARBAGE. WHAT? YOU GONNA GO AFTER YOUR PAL, THE PUNISHER NEXT?!

LOOK, YOU'RE SICK OF ME? *FINE!* I GOT MY ONE BIG SCORE! LET ME GO TO MY FREAKING ISLAND AND DRINK OUT OF A DAMN COCONUT! YOU'LL *NEVER* SEE ME AGAIN!

RIGHT. LIKE THIS WAS ABOUT THE MONEY? NO. IT WAS ABOUT THE THRILL. PLANNING THE PERFECT STUNT AND PULLING IT OFF.

THAT'S HOW YOU'RE WIRED. *YOU'RE* THE ONE WHO'LL NEVER STOP.

WHIRRK

HEH. YOU'RE RIGHT. BUT HERE'S THE THING, I KNOW HOW *YOU'RE* WIRED.

SURFACE-TO-AIR-MISSILE. WITH YOUR SPIDER-SENSE, I'D NEVER BE ABLE TO HIT YOU. BUT YOUR FRIENDS, THE COPS ON THE SHORE?

THIS'LL GO ALL MICHAEL BAY ON THEIR #@$!

THAT SHOULD KEEP YOU BUSY FOR A WHILE.

BECK, DON'T--

FWOOOOSH

FIRE!

THWIP THWIP

T3C

NO!

THERE'S THREE POINT FIVE BILLION DOLLARS HERE! WE HAVE TO--

ABANDON SHIP! WOMEN AN' SPIDERS FIRST!

I HATE YOU.

D'YOU THINK HE'S...?

PLEASE. HE'S MYSTERIO.

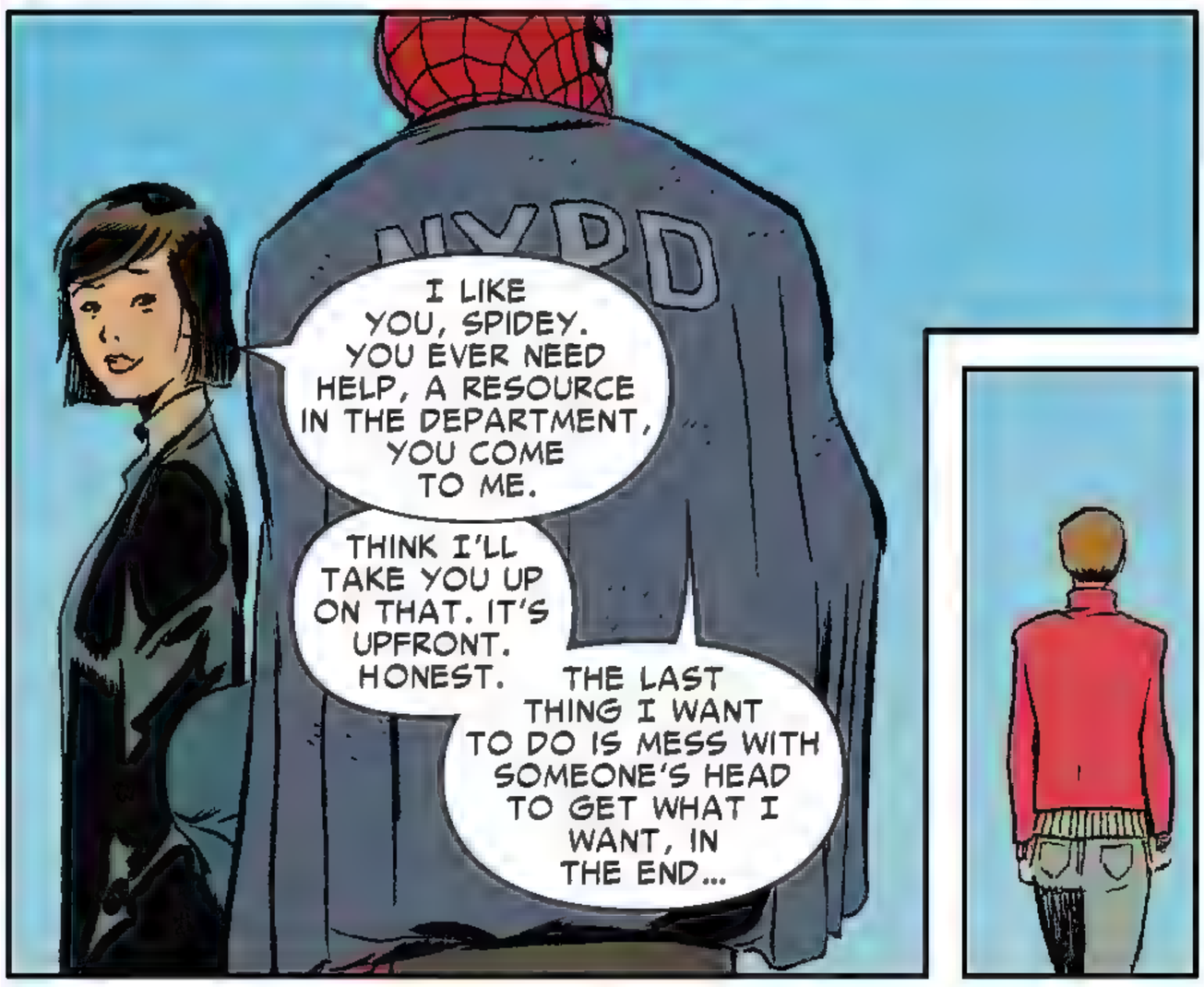
HE'S PROBABLY HALFWAY TO HOBOKEN BY NOW.

PD
OOH, COFFEE! THANKS, CARLIE.
ANYTHING FOR YOU, SPIDEY. SPEAKING OF WHICH...
THAT TRACER YOU HAD ME PUT ON MY DAD... GETTING ANY SIGNALS?
SORRY. AND THAT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN. WHEN CROOKS FIND 'EM, THEY DITCH 'EM.
EVERYBODY ELSE SAVES 'EM AND PUTS 'EM UP ON EBAY.

BY THE WAY, MY OFFICE IS CLEARING YOU OF THOSE MAGGIA MURDERS.
WHEW! GOOD TO KNOW.
THEY CAN ALL ROT IN HELL.

GEEZ, CAP. WHAT GOT INTO YOU?
THESE. THEY FOUND THEM IN THE WRECKAGE.

THE NEXT "DIRTY COP" THEY PLANNED ON "RESURRECTING" WAS JEAN DEWOLFF.
ON SECOND THOUGHT, ROTTING IN HELL'S TOO GOOD FOR 'EM.


NYPD
I LIKE YOU, SPIDEY. YOU EVER NEED HELP, A RESOURCE IN THE DEPARTMENT, YOU COME TO ME.
THINK I'LL TAKE YOU UP ON THAT. IT'S UPFRONT. HONEST.
THE LAST THING I WANT TO DO IS MESS WITH SOMEONE'S HEAD TO GET WHAT I WANT, IN THE END...

"...THAT NEVER PAYS."

HMM.

Paradise Island
ENJOY THE SILENCE

Air Tropical

NEW LOW, LOW FARES

GOD, HOW I HATE HIM.

QUENTIN BECK, A.K.A. *MYSTERIO*, YOU ARE UNDER ARREST.

NICE TRY, BUT SHE'S DEAD.

I KNOW, I THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE THAT TOUCH. IT'S VERY YOU.

CHAMELEON? LONG TIME, NO SEE. SO WHAT'VE YOU BEEN UP TO?

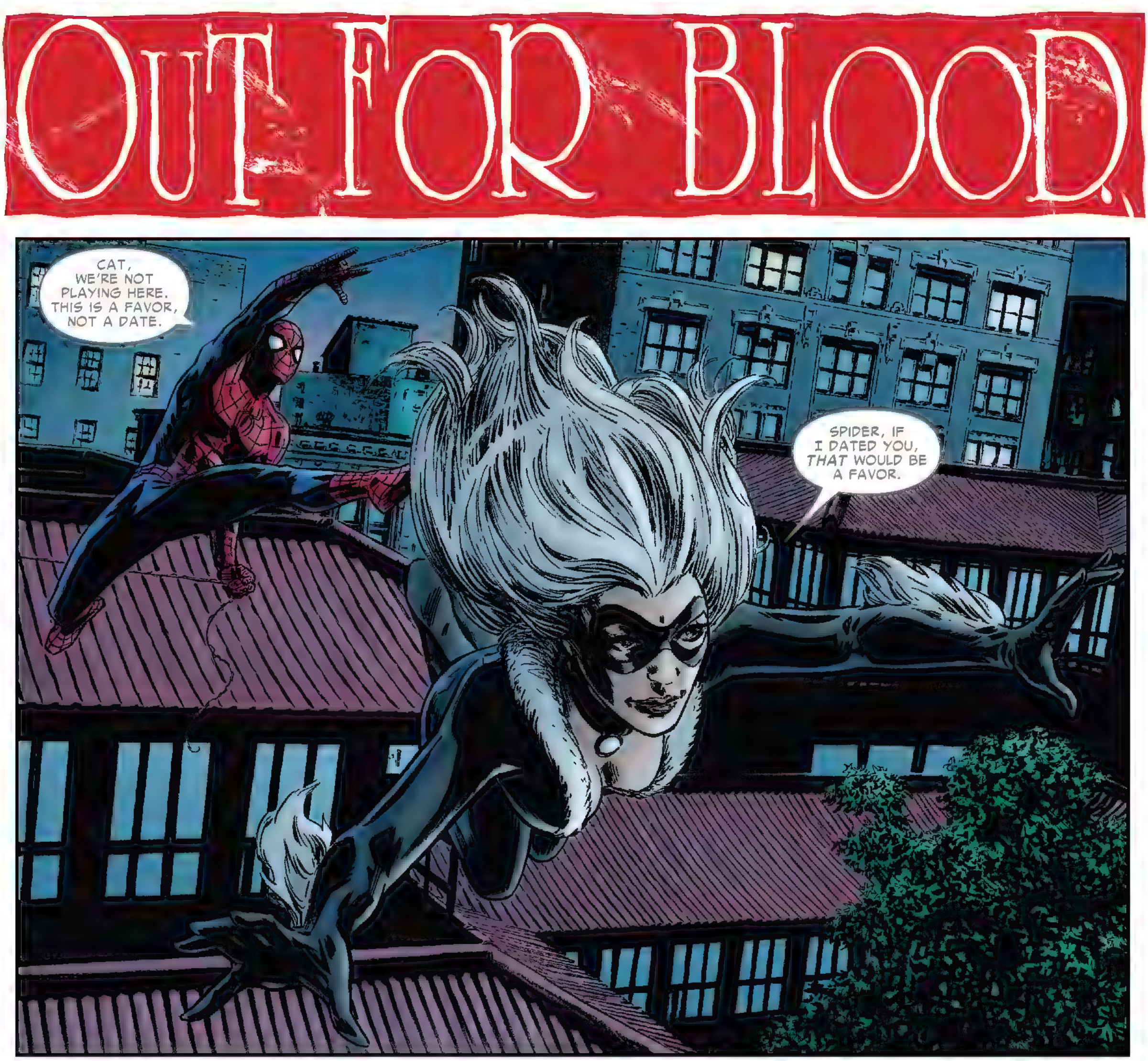
MAKING SOME NEW FRIENDS...

AND THEY'RE DYING TO MEET YOU!

Next: Black Cat Fever!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #621

OUT FOR BLOOD



PLEASE! THIS'S SERIOUS BUSINESS. LIFE OR DEATH!

WE'RE HERE...

OOH. SECURITY CAMERA.

SO REMIND ME. WHY'RE WE HERE AGAIN?

"...BECAUSE ONE OF MY WORST ENEMIES, *MR. NEGATIVE*, HAS BEEN MIXING UP THIS POISON OF HIS CALLED *THE DEVIL'S BREATH.*

"...A POISON *SPECIFICALLY* DESIGNED TO KILL ME--AND *ONLY* ME.

"AND THE *KEY* INGREDIENT IS A SAMPLE OF *MY BLOOD--*"

NOT ASKING FOR A RECAP, SWEETIE. I *KNOW* WHAT I'M HERE TO GRAB. I MEANT WHY'RE *WE* HERE. I WORK BETTER *ALONE.*

AND SINCE HE HAS HIS OWN BRAND OF *SPIDER-MAN PESTICIDE*, THIS'S THE *LAST* PLACE YOU SHOULD BE.

NEGATIVE IS MAJOR LEAGUE, FELICIA. I COULDN'T SEND YOU INTO HIS COMPOUND WITHOUT WATCHING YOUR BACK.

YOUR SAFETY HERE IS *MY* RESPONSIBILITY.

AWW. AND HERE I THOUGHT YOU WANTED SOME ALONE TIME WITH ME.

HATE TO BREAK IT TO YOU, PUSSYCAT, BUT WE'RE HARDLY ALONE.

TSCH. GOT IT COVERED.

WHAT? COULD A' SWORN I *CHARGED* THIS THING.

FTZZZ

YOUR BAD LUCK POWERS?

LIKE I SAID, I GOT IT COVERED. TRUST ME, SPIDER, I'M *GOOD* AT THIS.

SO YOU CAN RUN BACK TO YOUR LI'L WEB-- THIS KITTY'S JUST FINE ON HER OWN.

IT'S NOT UP FOR DISCUSSION. AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I CAN PULL MY OWN...

KRYK

...WEIGHT.

HEY! WHO'S UP THERE?!

EEP!

THWAP!

SO? WHAT NOW, MR. STICKY FINGERS?

I *SAID* I WAS SORRY--

YOUR WEBBING DISSOLVES IN AN HOUR. YOU GONNA BABYSIT THIS GUY 'TIL THEN? AND KILLING HIM'S OUTTA THE QUESTION.

MMPPH

YEAH! AND EVEN IF I *COULD* (WHICH I *WOULDN'T*), I DON'T THINK NEGATIVE'S GOONS *CAN* DIE.

WONDERFUL.

BEFORE WE HAD *ALL* THE TIME IN THE WORLD. *NOW*, THANKS TO YOU, WE'RE ON THE CLOCK!

"THAT'S IT! YOUR TIME'S UP!"

Forest Hills, Queens.

NOW TAKE OFF!

WE AHH WICKED SORRY, FOR WHAT HAPPENED, AUNT MAY--

WHATEVER. WHEN YOU'RE BACK IN BOSTON, YOU TELL COUSIN JULIA...

...SHE CAN EXPECT A *BILL* FOR WHAT YOU BRATS DID TO MY HOUSE!

GOOD RIDDANCE. IF I NEVER SEE A REILLY AGAIN, IT'LL BE TOO SOON.

MAY, WAIT. I STILL HAVEN'T FOUND A PLACE YET. IF I COULD JUST--

LOOK, WHEN I WAS DOING BETTER, IT WAS *MY* MONEY THAT REBUILT THIS PLACE.

HOW *PATHETIC!*

EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE A DIME...

...YOU'RE *STILL* TRYING TO USE YOUR MONEY TO CONTROL PEOPLE.

YOU OSBORNS. YOU MAKE ME *SICK.* AND YOU'RE THE *WORST* OF 'EM, HARRY.

A LAZY, SHIFTLESS, WHINY CHILD. PROBABLY WHERE MY NEPHEW GETS IT FROM.

I-I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'D SAY--

MAY, I ALWAYS THOUGHT OF YOU LIKE FAMILY--

SLAM

AND I ALWAYS THOUGHT OF YOU AS "*THE RICH KID.*"

BUT NOW, WITHOUT YOUR MONEY, YOU'RE NOT EVEN THAT. YOU'RE *NOTHING.*

"AFTER THAT BLAST, I'M AMAZED *ANYTHING'S* LEFT STANDING."

Upper West Side, The Empyrean Opera House.

AND IT'S GOING TO TAKE FOREVER TO DIG THROUGH THIS MESS.

HOW SOON TILL IT'S SAFE TO GO IN THERE, COOPER? THAT GAS STILL HAS ME WORRIED.

THE GAS ISN'T AN ISSUE, CAPTAIN. I'VE DEALT WITH IT BEFORE.

F.D.N.Y

NYP

MYSTERIO SET OFF EXPLOSIVES INSIDE LAST ISSUE--STEVE.

IT'S DESIGNED TO ONLY KILL PEOPLE WITH SPECIFIC DNA. FIRST TIME OUT, BRUNO KARNELLI'S BLOOD WAS ADDED TO THE MIX...

...AND THAT GAS WENT AFTER THE TWO FAMILIES IN HIS BLOODLINE.

SPIDEY'S BLOOD WAS USED TO MAKE THIS BATCH.

F.D.N.Y

I'VE GOT A SAMPLE. WITH ANY LUCK, I'LL BE ABLE TO BREAK IT DOWN AND RE-CREATE IT IN THE LAB.

JUST WHAT OUR DEPARTMENT NEEDS: A GAS THAT CAN KILL SPIDER-MAN.

IF YOU DIDN'T PICK UP ON THAT COOPER, THAT WAS SARCASM!

CAPTAIN, I DIDN'T MEAN IT LIKE THAT. I THINK I CAN FIGURE OUT THE *PRE-CODED* FORMULA--

BZZT BZZT

OFFICER CARLIE COOPER, HERE. HOW CAN I--

DAD? IS THAT YOU?

YEAH, HONEY. I'VE GOT IT. MY TAKE FROM THE MYSTERIO JOB. WE'RE SET FOR *LIFE!*

IT'S TIME, CARLIE-BEAR. I'VE ARRANGED TRAVEL TO TAKE US OUT OF THE U.S. AND--

NOT OVER THE PHONE. I'LL TELL YOU WHERE WE CAN MEET.

YES. A SECLUDED SPOT...

"...JUST THE TWO OF US."

GNH. THAT'S A PRETTY TIGHT FIT.

NOW IF YOU COULD SQUEEEEZE PAST ME...

WAIT. JUST. THERE. GOOD.

OKAY, I MADE IT...

...SO WHY DO YOU NEED ME UP HERE?

WANT ME TO CHECK SOMETHING OUT WITH MY SPIDER-SENSE?

NO.

I WANT TO DO...

...THIS.

WHAT?! *NOW?!* IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BAD GUY'S LAIR?!

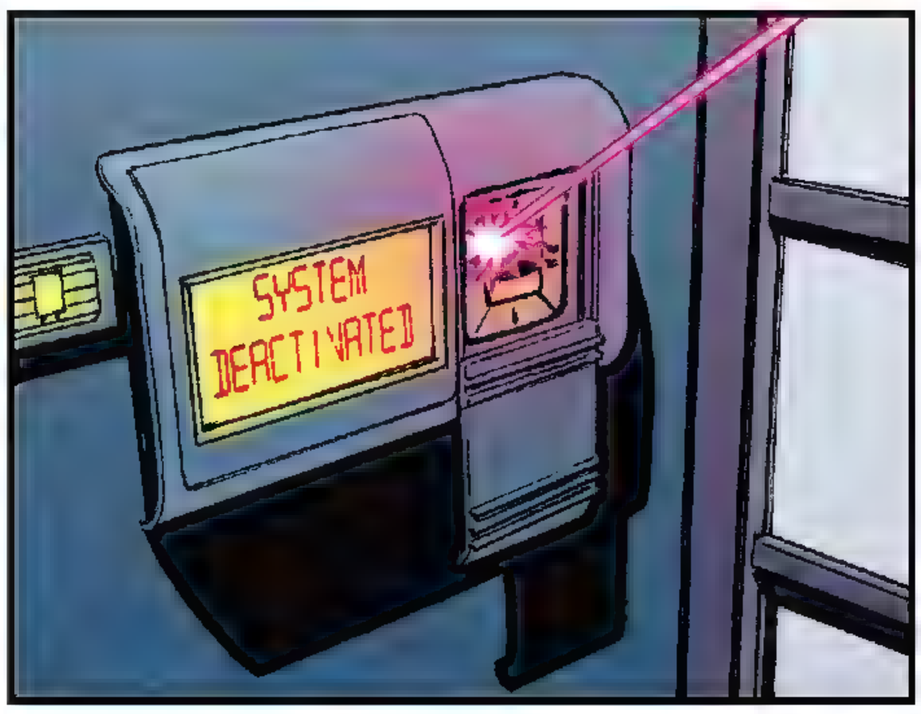
I KNOW. CAN YOU THINK OF ANYWHERE HOTTER?

CAT!

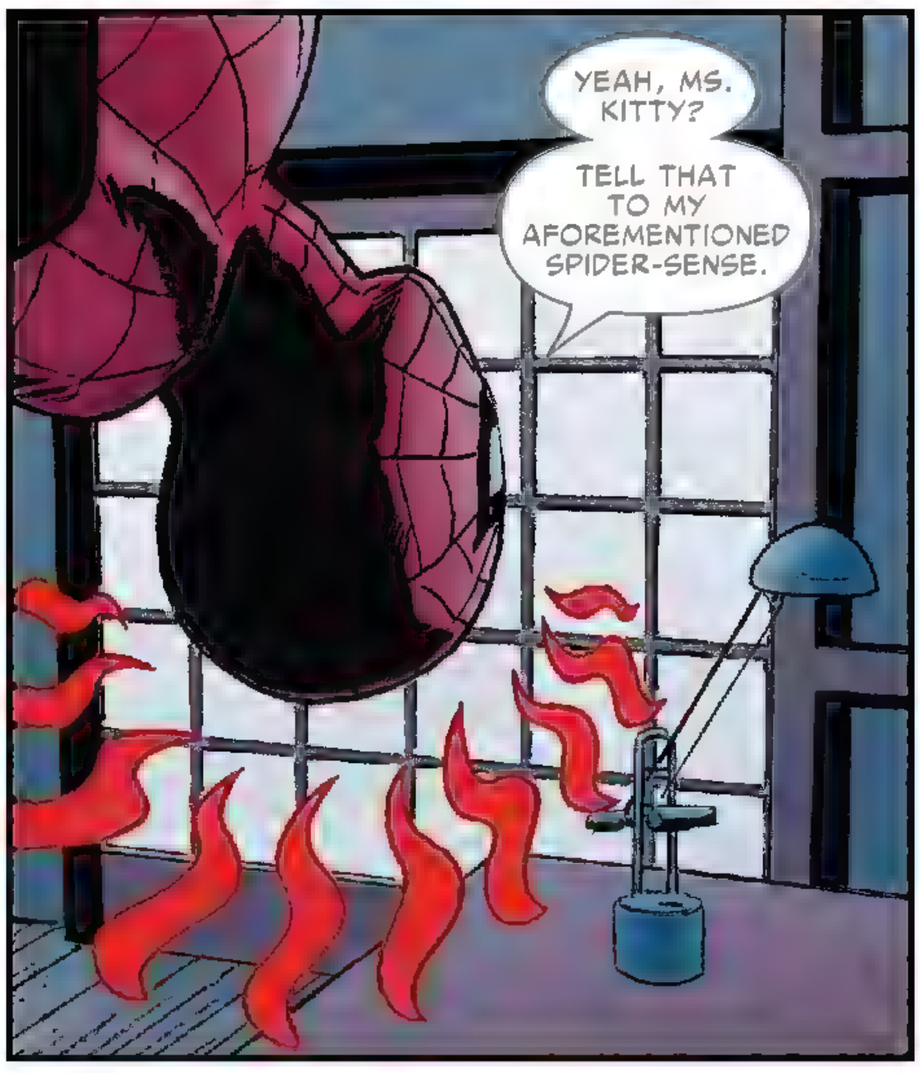
÷TCH÷

YOU ARE *NO* FUN AT ALL TONIGHT.

DEACTIVATION SEQUENCE INITIALIZED


SYSTEM DEACTIVATED

I'VE DISABLED THE PRESSURE SENSORS IN THE FLOOR.
WE'RE GOOD TO GO.


YEAH, MS. KITTY?
TELL THAT TO MY AFOREMENTIONED SPIDER-SENSE.

DEFINITE BADNESS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS DOOR.
AND YOU THOUGHT I HAD NOTHING TO CONTRIBUTE.
WELL, SPIDER, GUESS I WAS... WRONG.

HURT YOU TO SAY THAT, DIDN'T IT?

LI'L BIT. PICKING UP ANYTHING?

YEAH. SOMETHING'S COMING. OODLES OF IT. AND FAST.

MAYBE WE SHOULD PACK IT IN?

NAH. AND SPIDER, ABOUT BEFORE, YOU WERE SO RIGHT. YOU'VE A LOT TO CONTRIBUTE.

UM... THANKS?

LIKE DISTRACTIONS.

YOU MAKE THE *BEST* DISTRACTION!

CAT! NO! DON'T CLOSE THAT--

--D'OH!

IT'S SPIDER-MAN!

AAAAATTACK!

KNEW IT. SHOULD A' STAYED IN BED.

Brooklyn. Mary Jane Watson's Apartment.

KNOK KNOK KNOK

ONE SEC...

ONLY ONE PERSON IT COULD BE AT THIS HOUR...

KNOK KNOK

EASY THERE, RINGO. I'M COMING.

...GOTTA BE PETE. PROBABLY FINISHED FIGHTING ELECTRO OR SOMEBODY AND NEEDS A CHANGE OF--

HEY THERE, MJ! LOOKS LIKE YOU JUST HIT THE--

I JUST HIT THE *DOOR* PRIZE.

HAROLD T. OSBORN, WHAT ON EARTH--?

SORRY, RED. I JUST NEED A PLACE TO CRASH, TONIGHT. MAYBE TOMORROW.

YOU WON'T EVEN KNOW I'M HERE. C'MON, IT'LL BE LIKE OLD TIMES.

WELL, NOT LIKE WHEN WE WERE DATING. OR WHEN I WAS THE GOBLIN AND I WAS GONNA THROW YOU OFF A BRIDGE...

OTHER OLD TIMES. DOES THIS COUCH FOLD OUT?

OH, THIS IS *NOT* GOOD. I DON'T WANT TO SEE HARRY LIVING OUT OF A CLOSET AT THE COFFEE BEAN AGAIN...

...BUT *THIS?*

"THIS IS JUST ASKING FOR TROUBLE.

POK

KNOW WHAT? I'VE *COMPLETELY* CHANGED MY MIND ABOUT YOU GUYS.

THWAP

KRUNK

IT JUST HIT ME, *NONE* OF YOU CAN DIE.

THAT MEANS I CAN *TOTALLY* CUT LOOSE! I DON'T HAVE TO HOLD A *DARN* THING BACK!

THIS'S *AWESOME!* LOOKIT ME! *BIFF! BAM! KAPOW!*

SERIOUSLY, I WANNA FIGHT YOU INNER-DEMONS EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK!

FORGET GREEN HULK, I CAN POUND ON YOU LIKE YOU'RE THE *RED HULK!*

I CAN OPEN UP A *CAN* OF HURTIN' ON YOU! HECK, I CAN SHAKE IT UP FIRST!

ENOUGH OF THIS: STAND ASIDE.

UH-OH, I KNOW *THAT* VOICE.

MR. NEGATIVE.

I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS. SEE, I'VE FIGURED OUT HOW YOUR POWER WORKS. YOU CREATE A *NEGATIVE CHARGE.*

VERY GOOD, SPIDER-MAN.

YOU CAN USE IT ON *PEOPLE,* THE WAY YOU BROUGHT OUT MY NEGATIVE SIDE. BUT I *FOUGHT* THROUGH IT, AND THAT WON'T WORK ON ME TWICE.

NO. IT WON'T.

YOU CAN CHARGE UP *WEAPONS.* YOU CAN EVEN CHARGE *YOURSELF* UP AND GIVE YOURSELF SOME SUPER-STRENGTH.

SEE MR. NEGATIVE #1-#3 --STEVE.

BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? *EVERYBODY'S* GOT THAT. BIG DEAL.

YES. YOU'VE SEEN ME DISPLAY A MEASURE OF "*SUPER-STRENGTH.*"

WAP

HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED ITS UPPER LIMIT?

UM. NO...

THWOK

ERHH...

Tribeca.

U-STORE-IT

I REMEMBER THIS PLACE. IT'S WHERE WE PACKED UP RUTHIE'S THINGS.

YOU GOT IT, DAD.

IF WE'RE GOING AWAY WITH MYSTERIO AND THE MAGGIA'S MONEY, WE'RE NOT *EVER* COMING BACK, ARE WE?

NO. I GUESS NOT.

THEN I DON'T WANT TO GO WITHOUT BRINGING SOME OF MOM'S STUFF.

FRAGILE

OF COURSE, HONEY.

THERE'S ALSO SOMETHING ELSE I NEED.

WHATEVER YOU WANT, CARLIE.

CERTAINTY.

...

WHAT-- WHAT DID YOU TAKE OUT OF THAT CRATE?

A GAS MASK.

COME AGAIN?

THIS IS THE DEVIL'S BREATH POISON.

IT'S DESIGNED TO ONLY KILL PEOPLE FROM A SPECIFIC BLOODLINE.

I SYNTHESIZED THIS TONIGHT FROM A SAMPLE I FOUND AT THE EMPYREAN CRIME SCENE.

WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT?

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS? I MIXED MY *OWN* BLOOD INTO IT... "DAD."

KSH

CARLIE-BEAR? WHY WOULD YOU--?

THE WAY I SEE IT, THERE ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES. EITHER YOU'RE *NOT* RAY COOPER, YOU'RE AN ACTOR THAT MYSTERIO OR THE MAGGIA HIRED.

SOMEONE TRYING TO TRICK ME INTO THINKING MY DAD WAS A DIRTY COP WHO FAKED HIS OWN DEATH.

OR YOU REALLY *ARE* THAT MAN...

...AND MY *BIOLOGICAL* FATHER. AND THIS GAS WILL KILL YOU IN A MATTER OF SECONDS.

IF THAT'S THE CASE, I DON'T CARE. BECAUSE THE MAN I THOUGHT YOU WERE, HE DIED INSIDE YOU YEARS AGO.

NO...

YOU UNGRATEFUL LITTLE @#$%!

GIMME THAT MASK!

GIVE IT TO ME!

NOW I HAVE MY ANSWER.

AND THERE'S SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW, RAY. THAT'S *NOT* DEVIL'S BREATH.

IT'S KNOCKOUT GAS.

PLEASE PUT ME THROUGH TO CAPTAIN WATANABE.

YURI? THIS IS OFFICER CARLIE COOPER. I NEED A PICKUP. ANOTHER COLLAR FROM THE EMPYREAN CASE. A DIRTY COP.

NO. NO ONE SPECIAL.

ALLLMOST GOT IT. *THERE!*

I'M SURE SPIDEY *THINKS* I SKATE BY ON LUCK, BUT THIS TAKES LOTS OF WORK...

TIKK TIKK TIKK

KLOK

...AND WILL-POWER. OHHH. LOOK AT ALL OF THAT JUST SITTING THERE. THIS'S WHERE YOU COULD CAVE, FELICIA.

AND *THAT* IS WHY HE PROBABLY WANTED TO TAG ALONG. TO PULL ON MY LEASH RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

IT HAS TO BE A SIMPLE SWAP. NEGATIVE CAN NEVER KNOW I WAS HERE.

IF THIS IS GONNA WORK...

"...THERE CAN'T BE ONE THING OUT OF PLACE."

I KNOW YOU'RE AROUND HERE, SPIDER-MAN. IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO IMPRESS UPON YOU.

I LIVE BY A CODE. IT MIGHT NOT BE ONE THAT YOU CAN UNDERSTAND OR AGREE WITH, BUT IT IS ABSOLUTE AND I AM BOUND BY IT.

AND IT TELLS ME THAT I MUST VISIT MY WRATH UPON YOU LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

YOU HAVE INVADED MY HOME. I CANNOT LET THAT PASS.

THE PRICE FOR IT WILL BE MOST... TERRIBLE.

HMM.

IS THAT SO? WELL GUESS WHAT?

SPIDER-MAN? WHERE ARE YOU?

MY CODE SAYS I NEED TO TAKE WHATEVER YOU'RE PLANNING AND GIVE IT BACK TO YOU IN IMAX 3-D!

BECAUSE YOU INVADED MY HOME FIRST!

I HAVE DONE NO SUCH THING.

WRONG.

NEW YORK.

NEW YORK IS MY HOME.

THERE YOU ARE. HOW'D YOU GET TO THE MEET UP SPOT BEFORE ME?
TOOK A SHORT CUT. THROUGH TWO WINDOWS...AND THREE WALLS.
CHEER UP, SPIDER. YOU WON.
OW.
DOESN'T FEEL LIKE WINNING.
SAYS THE MAN WHO GOT WHAT HE WANTED.
MY BLOOD. GOOD. I COULD USE A QUART ABOUT NOW. SO NEGATIVE HAS...?
A VIAL OF PIG'S BLOOD, COURTESY OF A LOCAL BUTCHER SHOP.
NEXT TIME HE TRIES TO USES THAT GAS...
...YOU'LL HAVE ONE OVER ON 'IM.
SPEAKING OF HAVING ONE OVER ON SOMEONE...
CAT...
...YOU OWE ME ONE, SPIDER. AND HERE'S WHERE I COLLECT.
OW. RIBS.
MY BACK.
OOH! GROIN!
-SIGH- YOU CAN DO WHATEVER A *SPIDER* CAN, RIGHT?
YEAH?
WHEN YOU CAN DO WHATEVER A *MAN* CAN, CALL ME.
YEAH. SHE'S A KEEPER. SOMEONE YOU CAN BRING HOME TO THE FOLKS.

Central Park West. Jay Jameson's Apartment.

NO, I HAD NO IDEA. WAIT, SHE JUST WALKED IN.

MAY, IT'S YOUR SISTER, JAN.

OH, WHAT DOES *SHE* WANT?

SHE SAYS YOU KICKED ALL OF HER NIECES OUT OF THE HOUSE ON INGRAM STREET. THAT YOU SENT THEM BACK TO BOSTON.

AND?

MAY, FINDING THE REILLYS, RECONNECTING YOU WITH THEM, THAT WAS MY WEDDING GIFT TO YOU--

SOME GIFT. A BUNCH OF FREELOADING LEECHES.

I'M SO TIRED, JAY. TIRED OF LOOKING AFTER EVERYONE *ELSE* IN THIS WORLD.

THESE ARE OUR GOLDEN YEARS. WE DESERVE TO HAVE THEM TO OURSELVES...

...WITHOUT ANY UNGRATEFUL SPONGES AND HANGERS-ON!

Brooklyn.

HARRY? I'VE GOT TO RUSH OVER TO THE STUDIO FOR A QUICK SHOOT...

...BUT WHEN I GET BACK, THE TWO OF US SHOULD...

MMM. IS THAT--?

YOUR MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY.

I'M DREAMING, RIGHT? SINCE WHEN CAN MR. MONEYBAGS...?

FLOP TWO OVER HARD, WITH A SHORT STACK, AND A SIDE A' BACON?

YOU'VE BEEN GONE A WHILE, RED. THINGS CHANGE. Y'KNOW I ALSO BREW ONE *HECKUVA* POT A' COFFEE.

MR. O, THIS COULD BE THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP.

The Lower East Side.

OW. I'M GONNA BE FEELING THIS FOR SOME TIME. BUT IT WAS WORTH IT...

...JUST KNOWING THAT NEGATIVE CAN'T HOLD HIS KILL-SPIDEY-GAS OVER MY HEAD ANYMORE.

NOW HE'LL JUST HAVE TO GET RID OF ME THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY... LIKE PUNCHING ME TO THE *MOON*.

PETER?! OH MY GOD! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

CARLIE? WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

THOUGHT I'D CATCH YOU ON THE WAY HOME. I'VE DECIDED TO... I DUNNO...

...TAKE CHARGE OF MY LIFE. START CALLING THE SHOTS FOR ONCE.

AND THE WAY YOU BLEW ME OFF FOR LUNCH THE OTHER DAY...

I WAS *REALLY* GONNA LAY INTO YOU, PETE.

BUT LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE BEAT ME TO IT.

AH. RIGHT. THIS. I CAN EXPLAIN...

"YOU GOT ROUGHED UP WHILE ON AN ASSIGNMENT FOR FRONT LINE."

I'VE BEEN SAYING THAT A *LOT*, HUH?

C'MON, LET'S CLEAN YOU UP.

HEY, MICHELE. YOU GUYS HAVE A FIRST AID KIT?

I DO. IN THE BATHROOM, UNDER THE SINK.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, CARLIE? GOT A SPLINTER OR SOMETHING?

DON'T TELL ME YOU DON'T NOTICE...

THAT PARKER'S BEAT TO HELL? KINDA USED TO IT BY NOW.

MAKES PERFECT SENSE.

LIVE WITH HIM FOR A WHILE AND IT'S HARD TO IMAGINE *NOT* WANTING TO KICK HIS BUTT.

OR SHOOT HIM.

OR WATERBOARD HIM.

SHE'S GOT A POINT, PETE. FROM THE MOMENT I SAW YOU, I THOUGHT...

...I LIKE THIS GUY, I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I *REALLY* DO. BUT IF THERE'S ONE THING I LEARNED TODAY...

...THERE'S WHAT YOU *WANT* SOMEONE TO BE, AND SOMETIMES THAT'S A LONG WAY FROM WHO THEY REALLY ARE.

CARLIE, I'M SORRY FOR THE WAY I'VE BEEN TREATING YOU. YOU'VE ALWAYS COME THROUGH FOR ME, BUT I...

NO. PUPPYDOG EYES AND PARKER CHARM AREN'T GONNA CUT IT THIS TIME. I'M LOOKING DEEPER NOW.

YOU ONLY GET ONE MORE SHOT AT THIS PETE. TAKE YOUR TIME. MAKE IT COUNT.

WHAT'S THIS? THE NEW TAKE-CHARGE-CARLIE?

YES. I WENT THROUGH A GAUNTLET TODAY.

UNH. I KNOW THAT FEELING.

NO, YOU DON'T. WHEN YOU DO IT RIGHT...

...IT MAKES YOU STRONGER. YOU JUST HAVE TO REACH THE OTHER SIDE.

YEAH...

"...WHEREVER THAT IS."

Phelcorp Pharmaceuticals.

CONNORS? YOU'RE NOT LOGGED IN FOR LAB TIME. WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU WORKING ON?

OH! MR. KING, YOU DIDN'T KNOCK. I--

LET ME CLEAR THIS UP. I WAS JUST--

ON SECOND THOUGHT, THE LESS I KNOW ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING, THE BETTER.

AS LONG AS I HAVE A GUARANTEE THIS RESEARCH OF YOURS--

--WHICH IS NOW THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF PHELCORP, IS GOING TO PUT THIS COMPANY ON THE BLEEDING EDGE.

MY WORK WITH R-COMPLEX STIMULATION HAS SHOWN EARLY PROMISE...I THINK WITHIN THE YEAR--

MAYBE WE GOT OUR WIRES CROSSED SOMEWHERE, CONNORS. WE HAVE SEVERAL E.D. PATENTS THAT EXPIRE NEXT QUARTER.

I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE MAKING 21ST CENTURY SNAKE OIL...I NEED SOMETHING TO TAKE UPSTAIRS NEXT MONTH.

I...I'LL TRY.

YOU'LL DO MORE THAN TRY. WE'RE YOUR LAST CHANCE, CONNORS. WITH YOUR HISTORY NO ONE ELSE WILL GO NEAR YOU.

YOU WANT TO SHOW THE COURTS YOU CAN SUPPORT YOUR SON? YOU NEED US...

DON'T WORRY, SIR. I'M THE MAN FOR THIS JOB...

...THE ONE WHO'LL TAKE YOU TO THE *BLEEDING EDGE.*

TO BE CONTINUED...SSSSSOON...

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #622

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU SOLD IT?!

"I," A PERSONAL PRONOUN INDICATING *MYSELF.*

"*SOLD*," PAST TENSE OF "*TO SELL*," TO HAND OVER AN ARTICLE OR SERVICES IN EXCHANGE FOR *MONEY*--

I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS!!

SPIDER, I'M A *THIEF.* IT'S WHAT I *DO*--

DON'T YOU "*SPIDER*" ME!! THAT'S A VIAL OF MY *BLOOD* WE'RE TALKING ABOUT! WE *BOTH* NEARLY GOT KILLED STEALING IT BACK FROM MISTER NEGATIVE!

EXACTLY! WHAT'S MY *PROFIT MARGIN* ON THAT?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?!

CALM *DOWN.* YOU GET SO *UPTIGHT* ABOUT YOUR *BODILY FLUIDS*...

CLIFFS NOTES OF LAST ISH. --"GET TO THE STORY" STEVE

"IF YOU'RE GOING TO BE A *BABY* ABOUT IT, YOU CAN TRY BUYING IT *BACK.*

"I SOLD IT TO HARMLESS UNDEAD WANNABES-- '*DRACS*' THEY'RE CALLED ON THE CLUB CIRCUIT.

"THEY RAID CELEBRITY BLOOD DRIVES, BLOOD BANKS IN THE 90210 AREA CODE, THAT KIND OF THING, TO GET THEIR HANDS ON *A-LIST PLASMA*...

"WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL? THE DRACS ARE JUST GONNA *DRINK* IT!"

OF ALL THE IMMORAL AND/OR *AMORAL* THINGS FELICIA HAS DONE IN THE COURSE OF OUR QUOTE-UNQUOTE "*RELATIONSHIP*," *THIS* TAKES THE CAKE.

WHAT AM I *DOING* WITH A WOMAN WHO HAS NO INTEREST IN ME WHEN I'M NOT WEARING *WEBS--AND* PULLS STUNTS LIKE *THIS?*

I GUESS I SHOULD BE *MORE* WORRIED ABOUT WHAT MY ROOMMATE *MICHELE* WILL DO TO ME WHEN SHE LEARNS I'VE "*BORROWED*" HER *MAKEUP*...

...UHH...

PFFT! 1992 CALLED. THEY WANT THEIR *VAMPIRE* BACK...

SON OF A *VONDROOK!*

SO MUCH FOR TRYING TO "*BLEND IN.*"

WOW, THE DEFINITION OF "UNDEAD" REALLY *HAS* CHANGED SINCE THE LAST TIME I PAID ATTENTION...

...THESE LOOK LIKE THE *COOL KIDS* FLASH THOMPSON & LIZ ALLAN WOULD SIT WITH IN THE MIDTOWN HIGH CAFETERIA...

IS THAT GLITTER?

MYTHS *CHANGE*, DO THEY NOT? THEY *EVOLVE* WITH THE TIMES.

MAYBE.

SEEMS LIKE THEY'RE *GLAMORIZING* SOMETHING THAT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A *CURSE*, THOUGH, RIGHT?

A CURSE MUST ALSO BE *ATTRACTIVE*, YES? OTHERWISE...

...WHO WOULD *AFFLICT* THEMSELVES WITH IT?

TO BE ASSURED OF A LOVE THAT WILL NEVER FADE...

NEVER AGE...

...ONE COULD *LOSE* ONESELF IN SUCH A LOVE *FOREVER.*

YEAH... YOU...SEEM TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING* ABOUT.

MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME. I'M *NEW* HERE. I'M LOOKING FOR--

A VIAL OF YOUR BLOOD. I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR MIND.

YES. THAT'S RIGHT.

I KNOW WHO HAS IT.

WHO? TELL ME.

HIS NAME IS *MICHAEL MORBIUS.*

"*MORBIUS?* BUT HE'S--"

"YES?"

"HE'S A *REAL* VAMPIRE."

"SOME MIGHT QUIBBLE WITH THAT."

"I GUESS I SHOULDN'T JUDGE.

"WHEN I FIRST MET HIM, I HAD *SIX ARMS.*"

"HOW *NOVEL.*"

MORBIUS MOVES AROUND QUITE A LOT. BUT *THIS* LAIR IS WHERE HE IS *TONIGHT.*

THANK YOU. I'M LUCKY I RAN INTO YOU.

LUCK HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

YOU ARE THE ONE I'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR...

I ALWAYS LOVE IN HORROR MOVIES HOW THEY'RE, LIKE,

"IT'S MIDNIGHT AND PITCH-BLACK OUTSIDE! LET'S GO TO THE SPOOKY CREATURE'S HIDEOUT NOW!"

SECOND FAVORITE:

"THANK GOSH I'M FINALLY ALONE WHILE THERE'S A KILLER ON THE LOOSE!

"AS A SEXY COED I AM CONTRACTUALLY OBLIGATED TO TAKE MY SHIRT OFF. WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?"

(WHAT'S WITH THE CRACKERS? MORBIE FEEDING PIGEONS?)

ANYWAY, MAY PARKER DIDN'T RAISE NO DUMMIES.

IF I HAVE TO PENETRATE MORBIUS'S TERRIFYING...UH...

...FREE CLINIC FOR THE POOR...

...OF DEATH...

...IT'S GOING TO BE AT THE HEIGHT OF MORNING RUSH HOUR!

KLAK KLAK KLAK KLAK K

AND THERE GO THE LIGHTS.

OKAY, SO AUNT MAY RAISED HALF A DUMMY.

MAYBE I SHOULD JUST GO AHEAD AND TAKE MY SHIRT OFF NOW.

MY FRIEND

YOU HAVE FOUND HIM

NOW RETURN MY FAVOR

AND INVITE ME IN

MY FRIEND

SURE, WHY NOT? C'MON IN!

THE MORE THE MERRIER!

SPIDER-MAN...

...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

DARLING.

UHHNNHHH!!

BAWWHHOOOM

MARTINE!

IGNORE THE MASKED MAN, MICHAEL. HE MEANS *NOTHING* TO ME.

HE WAS JUST A MEANS FOR ME TO GET TO *YOU*, TO FORCE YOU TO *LOOK INTO MY EYES* AND SEE THE *TRUTH:*

I CANNOT NOT WANT YOU.

THERE IS NO ME WITHOUT YOU.

AWW...I HATE TO INTERRUPT THIS EPISODE OF "GOTHIC GIRL"...

THWAP

...BUT I FEEL LIKE I MISSED THE FIRST FIFTEEN MIN--

GRRAHHH!!

WHOOP!

THEN LET ME ELUCIDATE.

WHEN MY FIANCÉ MICHAEL'S EXPERIMENTS TO CURE HIS *RARE BLOOD DISORDER* TRANSFORMED HIM INTO A *LIVING VAMPIRE*, HE *FLED* FROM ME...*

...AS IF HE COULD GO *ANYWHERE* I WOULD NOT *FOLLOW!*

I BECAME A CREATURE OF THE NIGHT *MYSELF!*

*IN ASM #101-2! BLAH! --COUNT WACKER

MARTINE, MARTINE... PLEASE, *LISTEN* TO ME!

THAT BOTTOMLESS *LONGING* YOU MISTAKE FOR *LOVE* IS JUST THE *VOID* WHERE YOUR *SOUL* USED TO BE!

WHY CAN'T YOU JUST LET ME *BE?*

BECAUSE YOU ARE MY SOUL, MICHAEL.

YOU ARE MY HEROIN.

THWIP

WITHOUT YOU I AM AN OPEN WOUND THAT WILL NEVER HEAL.

THWIP

ONCE YOU JOIN ME AS A TRUE *UNDEAD*, AND YOU'VE AT LAST LET GO OF THE FINAL VESTIGES OF YOUR HUMAN LIFE...

...YOU WILL SEE THIS, TOO.

GEEZ LOUISE-- HER ARMS ARE AS STRONG--AND AS *COLD*--AS IRON!

YOUR MORTAL FRIEND...PERHAPS *HE* WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US TOO...AS MY *SLAVE*...

CAN'T...

BREAK FREE...

ALL RIGHT! STOP!

YOU WIN, MARTINE.

SKRRRAAAASSSCHH

NO, MICHAEL.

WE WIN.

I GUESS I HAVE TO FACE FACTS...

THERE'S *ONE* WAY TO *END* THIS PERMANENTLY...

...BUT...

...THAT USED TO BE A LIVING, BREATHING *HUMAN BEING* OUT THERE.

AND EVER SINCE *UNCLE BEN*, I SWORE THAT IF SPIDER-MAN WAS ANYTHING...

...HE WAS SOMEONE *WHO DIDN'T LET PEOPLE DIE.*

SO COLD... SO *HARD*...SO *BEAUTIFUL.*

YOU WILL TAKE CARE OF ME FOREVER, WON'T YOU, MICHAEL?

YES, MARTINE...

I...I DON'T THINK I CAN *DO* THIS.

I'M SORRY, MORBIUS...

...FOREVER.

SHUK

NNEEEEYYAAAAHHH!

NO!!

ZWOK

NO...

WE COULD HAVE-- CAPTURED HER--

WE COULD HAVE FOUND ANOTHER WAY--

KRAKKKK

NO. WE COULDN'T.

MARTINE DIED A LONG TIME AGO.

I-- WE--JUST HASTENED HER WAY HOME.

YOUR WORLD...AND MINE...DON'T EASILY MIX, SPIDER-MAN.

ONE WITH MY...CONDITION... CANNOT ENJOY THE LUXURY OF YOUR MORAL CLARITY.

SHE MANIPULATED MY MIND...GOT ME TO INVITE HER IN HERE...

HOW COULD I EVEN DO THAT...?

BLOOD IS ALL TO THESE CREATURES.

I IMAGINE THE VIAL OF YOURS I BOUGHT OFF THE DRACS QUALIFIED YOU AS A "RESIDENT" FOR HER RITUAL NEEDS.

"I'M TRYING TO DEVELOP A CURE FOR THE UNDEAD PLAGUE THAT'S INFECTED MY BEST FRIEND JACK RUSSELL.

"AND I CAN'T TURN ON THE NEWS WITHOUT SEEING YOU GETTING POUNDED INTO HAMBURGER.

"I THOUGHT YOUR BLOOD MIGHT HAVE USEFUL HEALING PROPERTIES."

SKKKSSHHH

I KNOW... I SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN IT WITHOUT YOUR KNOWLEDGE. I'M SORRY.

IT'S JUST...JACK... MARTINE...

I COULDN'T TAKE...BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR LOSING EVERYONE *CLOSE* TO ME...

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THAT *FEELS* LIKE...

ONLY IN THE SENSE THAT IT'S THE *STORY OF MY LIFE.*

LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH *QUICK,* HUH?

I GET *WOOZY* AROUND *NEEDLES.*

IT'S ALL RIGHT.

I HAVE APPLE JUICE.

IT IS THE LIFE

FRED VAN LENTE
WRITER

JOE QUINONES
ARTIST

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
LETTERER

Only be sure that you do not eat the blood; for the blood is the life, and you shall not eat the life with the flesh...
– Deuteronomy 12:23

THOMPSON'S GAINING ON THE OUTSIDE...

...AND FLASH THOMPSON WINS!!!

GO, FLASH!

ALL RIGHT, FLASH!!!

HE DID IT! HE WON AGAIN!!

DUDE, YOU ROCKED THAT!

AND BETTY TAUGHT ME HOW TO DO ROCKIN' FINGERS TO DRIVE THAT POINT HOME.

WAS THERE EVER ANY DOUBT, PUNY?

LEGS OR NO LEGS, I'M STILL THE FLASH!

STAGE FIVE: ACCEPTANCE.

Four Weeks Later...

THE BRONX.

James J. Peters V.A. Medical Center

THANKS FOR COMING, PETER...

EXIT

YOU KIDDING? IT MAKES MY DAY, BETTY. I MEAN, IF YOU TELL HIM, I *WILL* DENY IT, BUT...

...FLASH THOMPSON IS MY *INSPIRATION.*

CAN'T BELIEVE I JUST SAID THAT.

I SUPPOSE *SOME* DAYS ARE MORE INSPIRATIONAL THAN OTHERS...

DAMN IT, GET AWAY FROM ME!

I SHOULDN'T NEED YOUR HELP...

...IF IT'S DOABLE, I CAN DO IT.

COURSE YOU CAN, CORPORAL...

JUST PUT SOME WEIGHT ON THE NEW PINS...

--WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.

PLEASE... THE FLASH WAS BORN READY...

-NGK-

OKAY...

...HOW TOUGH COULD THIS...

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS:

STAGES OF GRIEF

GREG WEISMAN
WRITER

LUKE ROSS
ARTIST

ROB SCHWAGER
COLOR ARTIST

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
LETTERER

BE...?

IT'S OKAY, CORPORAL. WE ALL STUMBLE BEFORE WE WALK.

WHAT AM I, A TWO YEAR OLD?

FACE IT, I *CAN'T* DO THIS.

"*CAN'T*"? THE FLASH THOMPSON I GREW UP WITH DOESN'T KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD...

...OF A *LOT* OF WORDS ACTUALLY.

SO FUNNY, PARKER.

JUST GET ME BACK IN MY CHAIR...

STAGE FOUR: DEPRESSION.

EXIT

I DON'T UNDERSTAND, JEFF. I JUST SAW HIM TWO WEEKS AGO--

--AND HE WAS DOING *GREAT*. BETTER THAN GREAT, CONSIDERING WHAT HE'S BEEN THROUGH...

IT WAS A *MONTH* AGO, PETER! AND OBVIOUSLY, HE WAS *COVERING*--

NOT NECESSARILY...

EUPHORIA HAPPENS. *DEPRESSION* TOO.

THEY'RE PART OF THE PROCESS.

AND BELIEVE ME...IF THERE'S ONE THING I'VE LEARNED HERE...

...YOU CAN'T RUSH THE PROCESS.

Three Weeks Later...

James J. Peters V.A. Medical Center

YO, FLASHAROONIE--!

SHUT UP, PARKER! GET IN HERE...

...I NEED YOUR HELP.

UH, FLASH... WHAT'S ALL THIS?

MY *RESEARCH.*

WOW, TWO WORDS I *NEVER* EXPECTED OUT OF YOUR MOUTH.

SO FUNNY. I'VE BEEN *STUDYING--*

AND THERE'S ANOTHER ONE. MAYBE I'M DRUNK.

JUST LISTEN, WISEGUY! I'VE BEEN CHECKING OUT *CYBER-NETICS--*

OKAY, NOW I KNOW I'M--

--BUT I THINK WE CAN DO *BETTER...*

...WE CAN *GROW BACK MY LEGS!*

YOU KNOW SPIDEY. HE KNOWS THE SUPER-NERDS!

MAKE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND.

C'MON, FLASH, YOU DON'T NEED THEM. YOUR TWICE THE HERO--

SAVE IT. YOU KNOW... HELL I KNOW... I CAN DO IT!

BEEN A HERO ALL MY LIFE! ON THE GRIDIRON! IN IRAQ!

THEY GAVE ME A MEDAL, DIDN'T THEY?! TWO MEDALS!!

SEE, I'M NOT ASKING FOR A HANDOUT!

S.H.I.E.L.D... H.A.M.M.E.R... AVENGERS...WHOEVER... THEY GIVE ME BACK MY LEGS! JUICE 'EM UP FOR ME!

AND IN EXCHANGE I'LL BE THEIR CHAMPION! A SUPER HERO!

JUST TALK TO SPIDEY FOR ME!

STAGE THREE: BARGAINING.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED.

TALKING TO SPIDEY WAS THE *EASY* PART.

BUT WHAT ELSE IS A FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN SUPPOSED TO DO?

SO GIVE IT TO ME, BETTY.

WHAT IS GOING ON WITH FLASH?!

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THE *FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF?*

HI. HAVE WE *MET?* NAME'S PETER PARKER...

...AND I'M *ALL* ABOUT THE STAGES.

ME AND THE FIVE ARE OLD FRIENDS.

OF COURSE, SORRY.

I TALKED MORE WITH DOCTOR GUERIN.

HE THINKS FLASH IS JUST GOING THROUGH THE STAGES-- *BACKWARDS.*

YEP, THAT'S OUR FLASH...

PETER, I'M SERIOUS. HE STARTED WITH *"ACCEPTANCE."* THEN *"DEPRESSION."*

NOW HE'S *"BARGAINING..."*

AND YOU *KNOW* WHAT COMES NEXT...

WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY, DOC CONNORS...?

Phelcorp Pharmaceuticals.

HE'S MY... BIGGEST FAN. AND HE *NEEDS* OUR HELP.

HOW CAN *YOU* OF ALL PEOPLE ASK THIS OF ME?

YOU *KNOW* IT'S BEEN MY LIFE'S WORK TO FIND A WAY TO *REGROW* AMPUTATED LIMBS--

--AND YOU *KNOW* WHAT THE *RESULT* HAS BEEN!

IT WAS NICE CATCHING UP WITH DOC, BUT ULTIMATELY HE'S NOT THE BEST EXAMPLE FOR FLASH TO FOLLOW.

Internet Bubble Laundry.

ON THE FIRST FLOOR OF PETER PARKER'S APARTMENT BUILDING

C'MON THINK!

...AND MJ AND I HAVE SEPARATE ROOMS. SHE'S LIKE A SISTER, YA KNOW?

IT'S FINE, HARRY. REALLY I'M FINE WITH IT. WE'VE BOTH MOVED ON.

BELIEVE ME, OSBORN, I'VE GOT OTHER THINGS ON MY MIND RIGHT--

Facepage

Settings Logout

Midtow_

ve Status Stream

Stephen Wacker: Trains running late today; not a good start

Tom Brennan: Another loss by the Knicks last night! Where's Patrick Ewing when you need him?

Find love in your area! For free! Lots of desperate singles are looking to hook up every single day!

Screwball LIVE every Wednesday night! Join the millions and see what the fuss is all about! Spider-Man sightings galore!

HOLD IT! WE HAVE A WINNAH!

TOLD YOU I COULD TRACK HER DOWN FIRST.

REALLY? YOU FOUND HER?

AND YOU WON'T *BELIEVE* WHAT SHE DOES FOR A LIVING NOW. IT'S PERFECT.

...IF YA LIKED IT, THEN YA SHOULDA PUT A RING ON IT...

THAT'S MY PHONE!

HOLD THAT THOUGHT, HARRY...

HELLO?

OH, HI. UH...THANKS FOR CALLING ME BACK.

IT MEANS A LOT TO--

TO FLASH. RIGHT. EXACTLY WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY...

Two Weeks Later...

James J. Peters V.A. Medical Center

...I TALKED TO *EVERYONE* I COULD THINK OF.

EVERYONE WE COULD *TRUST*, ANYWAY.

AND I FIGURED YOU DESERVED TO HEAR IT FROM ME IN PERSON. I'M *SORRY.*

SO CONSIDERATE.

SO USELESS!!!

STAGE TWO: ANGER.

One Week Later...

James J. Peters V.A. Medical Center

SOME INSPIRATION *HE* TURNED OUT TO BE!

A REAL HERO TAKES RISKS...IS RESOURCEFUL...

Eudora - [In]

FROM: HH@reabilify.net
TO: eflasht@va.gov
DATE: Today 7:35pm
SUBJECT: GOOD NEWS!

Corporal Thompson,

REABILIFY™ has reviewed your situation and believes we can be of service to each other. Your exemplary record, training and experience make you an ideal candidate for our procedure.

REABILIFY™ can fit you with cybernetic replacements for your lost limbs, which will not disappoint. Not an idle promise, I can guarantee satisfaction based on my own personal experience. We're not talking about fancy prosthetics here; these are indestructible improvements over the original biological model. In fact, we strongly recommend you also replace your remaining limbs at the time of the procedure. We think you'll be glad you did.

As you can imagine, the price tag for new limbs is prohibitive.

But do not be concerned. REABILIFY™ will perform the procedure at no out-of-pocket cost to you. And you will soon work off your debt by using your existing skills and your new REABILITIES™ in our service.

I look forward to hearing from you,

HH

NEW LEGS. INDESTRUCTIBLE. NO COST. *PERFECT...*

STAGE ONE: DENIAL.

TIME TO GO.

HOLD--

NO WAY!

JUST LET ME ANSWER THIS E-MAIL, BRANT...

SORRY, BUT YOU ARE *NOT* GOING TO BE LATE...

"...TO YOUR OWN *BIRTHDAY PARTY!*"

HEY, FLASHERINO! LOOKIN' GOOD, DUDE!

OOF TINY! JASON! MAN, IT'S BEEN YEARS!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FLASH!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BIG GUY.
M.J.! LIZ! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU CAME!
AS A CERTAIN *QUARTERBACK* I ONCE DATED ALWAYS SAID..."WAS THERE EVER ANY DOUBT?"
HEY, *RANDY*. AND *JOSH*...MAN, I HEARD YOU MOVED TO *CALIFORNIA*.
SOME THINGS ARE WORTH TRAVELING FOR...
GENERAL!
AT EASE, CORPORAL. GOOD TO SEE YOU UP AND ABOUT...
NOT VERY "*UP*." AND NOT SURE *WHAT* I'M "*ABOUT*" ANYMORE...
I CAN ANSWER THAT...
...YOU'RE "*ABOUT*" THE GREATEST MAN I'VE EVER KNOWN.
YOU SAVED MY *HUSBAND'S* LIFE. WE CAN NEVER THANK YOU ENOUGH.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO...I MEAN...
JUST SHUT UP AND SHAKE MY HAND, PRIVATE.
BEST ORDER YOU EVER GAVE.

HEY, SIS. MOM, CUT IT OUT.

NOW, DON'T GET MAD, BUT WE BROUGHT SOMEONE...

PLEASE, NOT AUNT EUGENIA...

NOT QUITE.

NOW, EUGENE, DON'T--

DAD!!

I WARNED YOU NOT TO SHOW YOUR FACE UNTIL--

--I KNOW.

UNTIL I EARNED MY ONE-YEAR CHIP.

YOU... YOU FINALLY JOINED A.A.?

THE DAY I HEARD ABOUT... WELL...

YEAH.

STILL WASN'T SURE IF I SHOULD COME TONIGHT, BUT...

IT'S A START.

THANKS.

GUYS, THIS WHOLE "*IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE*" THING...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.

HEY, I JUST PROVIDED THE VENUE.

PETE PUT IT ALL TOGETHER.

YOU'RE KIDDING ME. *PUNY PARKER* DID THIS.

REALLY THOUGHT IT'D BE MORE OF A *ROAST*--

--AND I PREPARED SOME *ZINGERS*, BELIEVE ME.

ANYONE ELSE WANNA HEAR SOME CHEMISTRYAND PHOTOGRAPHY BASED PUTDOWNS? ANYONE?

WELL *THIS'LL* BE FUN TOO...

HELLO, EUGENE.

SHA SHAN.

BETTY.

HEY, HOW DID--?

HARRY AND PETER FOUND ME.

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE KEPT BUSY SINCE YOU *CHEATED* ON ME, AND I *DUMPED* YOU.

UHHHHH...

UHHHHH...

UHHHHH...

DID I MENTION SHE'S YOUR *NEW PHYSICAL THERAPIST?*

UHHHHH...

Five Weeks Later...

James J. Peters V.A. Medical Center

Eudora - [In]

File Edit Mailbox Message Transfer Special Tools Window Help

Eudora
In
Out
Junk
Trash

Label Who Date

16/214K/1K Default (Compact)

From: hh@reabilify.net
To: eflasht@va.gov
Subject: LAST CHANCE!

Corporal Thompson,

REABILIFY™ still awaits your res
nity of a lifetime.

As there is a long waiting list for ou
opportunity to join the REABILIFY™

Don't make a mistake you'll forever

HH

In

Out

DELETE.

COME ON, EUGENE. YOU CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT.

PUT SOME *WEIGHT* ON THOSE PROSTHETICS. NOW.

YES, MA'AM.

WHOOF!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

AND WHAT STAGE DO YOU CALL THIS, PETE? FALSE *EUPHORIA?*

I DON'T KNOW. IT SOUNDS MORE LIKE...

HA HA HA HA HA HA

STAGE ZERO: GRACE.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #5 — “GAUNTLET ORIGINS: VULTURE”

GAUNTLET: ORIGINS

VULTURE

Now:
Vernon C. Bain
Prison Barge.

RED.

WHY DOES EVERYTHING HAVE TO BE RED NOWADAYS?

LET'S GO, VULCHY.

HEY-- WHAT--

PURVES WANTS WORDS.

TOOMES.

ADRIAN TOOMES.

THAT A JEWISH NAME?

TITUS PURVES.

NOW THAT'S JUST *GOT* TO BE INBRED, WIFE-BEATING, METH-SUCKING *WHITE TRASH.*

WATCH YOUR *MOUTH* TALKING TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE *ARYAN--*

BRAND--

AAAGGHH!!

KRRAAKKK

NYHH...LEGGO... MAKE HIM LEGGO...MY WRIST...I THINK IT'S...

YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO SAY TO ME?

"MR. PRESIDENT?"

WELL SAY IT.

NOT ME.

THEM.

ADRIAN-- *DAD.* IT'S ME.

THEY'RE *HERE.* THEY'RE AT MY HOUSE!!

IF YOU DON'T DO WHAT THEY SAY...THEY SAY THEY'LL...

TOOMES

SO.

GOT YOUR ATTENTION?

GOOD.

MY BROTHERS' REACH IS AS LONG OUTSIDE AS IT IS INSIDE.

BUT FOR REASONS I DON'T GOT TO GET *INTO*...

...I GOT TO GET *OFF* THIS DAMN BARGE.

AND YOU GONNA *HELP* ME, TOOMES.

SOON AS I GOT WORD YOU WAS GONNA BE TRANSFERRED *HERE* 'CAUSE OF OVERCROWDING ON THE *RAFT* I BEEN LOOKING *INTO* YOU.

"AND I FOUND OUT A LOT.

"YOU INVENTED SOME KINDA *FLYING MACHINE.*

"BUT YOU DISCOVERED YOUR BUSINESS PARTNER WAS *CHEATING* ON YOU.

"SO YOU BOOSTED THE HARNESS FOR *YOURSELF.*

"ADDED SOME WINGS. YOU FIGURED OUT YOU GOT A STRENGTH BOOST FROM THE HARNESS, WHICH YOU ALREADY DEMONSTRATED ON POOR OL' BILLY THERE...

"...AND GRADUATED TO ROBBING BANKS AND TRYING TO KILL *THE BUG.*

"'COURSE, *I* WOULDA STILL *PATENTED* THE THING...MADE A BUNDLE *THAT* WAY, AFTER I TOOK OUT THE CHEATING BUSINESS GUY...

"BUT WHAT DO *I* KNOW? LIKE YOU SAY...

"...I'M JUST WHITE TRASH.

"LEAST YOU DID *ONE* NOT COMPLETELY STUPID USELESS THING IN YOUR LIFE.

"JURY-RIGGED A VULTURE HARNESS FROM SCRAPS IN A *PRISON MACHINE SHOP* ONCE. FLEW AWAY LIKE A BIRDIE.

"NOW...CORRECTION OFFICERS AIN'T SO DUMB THEY GONNA LET YOU WITHIN SNIFFING DISTANCE OF ANY OF THOSE PARTS AGAIN."

BUT *WE'VE* GOT BROTHERS IN EVERY FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL PEN IN THIS GREAT NATION OF OURS.

YOU TELL US WHAT *PARTS* WE NEED, AND WE'LL HAVE 'EM *SENT* HERE BEFORE ANYONE PUTS TWO AND TWO TOGETHER.

AND YOU'RE GONNA *BUILD* ME ONE OF YOUR FLYING HARNESSES.

UNLESS...

...YOU GOT A *PROBLEM* WITH THAT?

WHY, NO.

NO PROBLEM AT ALL.

Later that month.

YOU--YOU GONNA LET MY PARENTS GO *TODAY*, RIGHT, TITUS? IF I LOOK THE OTHER WAY?

BETTER PRAY I GET HOME IN TIME TO MAKE THE *CALL*, JACKSON.

MOVE IT, TOOMES!

THIS FLYING MACHINE BETTER BE LEGIT.

OR YOUR LITTLE GRANDSON--AND HIS MOM--

ENOUGH TEDIOUS THREATS.

SOME THINGS ARE A MATTER OF PROFESSIONAL PRIDE.

KLIKK

HAHAH!

IT... WHOA! WHOA!!

HA

YO.

VULCHY.

YOU SERVED YOUR PURPOSE.

TIME TA SAY GOODBYE.

OKAY.

GOODBYE.

DON'T BELIEVE IT DON'T BELIEVE IT JUST DON'T BELIEVE THIS

PURVES.

TOOMES...?

YOU MIGHT AS WELL SHUT UP.

I ADDED A *SPEAKER* TO THE HARNESS BUT NO MICROPHONE, SO I WOULDN'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO YOU.

BUT I WANT YOU TO *KNOW* SOMETHING.

TOOMES

"THE *REASON* I NEVER DIVULGED THE SECRETS OF MY FLYING HARNESS TO ANYONE, EVEN BY *PATENTING* IT...

"...IS THAT WHEN I CONFRONTED MY BUSINESS PARTNER, HE DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO *DENY* HE WAS STEALING FROM ME.

SKREEEEEE!!

"I DON'T BLAME HIM, REALLY. I LIVED MY LIFE SO FRAIL AND SO...REPRESSED UP TO THAT POINT...

"HE LOOKED DOWN ON ME LIKE A CARRION-FEEDER...WAITING FOR ITS PREY TO DROP."

BRRAAAAAAAPPP

AFTER THAT MOMENT, I SWORE...

...I'D BE THE ONE LOOKING DOWN. DOING WHAT I WANTED. TAKING WHAT I **WANTED.**

SPOTTING WEAKNESS.

TAKE **YOU**, FOR EXAMPLE.

YOU HAD POWER. BUT ONLY SO LONG AS YOU REMAINED **BEHIND BARS.**

YAAAAHHH!!

NOOOO-- WAIT!!

YOUR DESIRE TO **ESCAPE**... YOUR **NEEDING** SOMETHING FROM ME...THAT MADE YOU **WEAK.**

AND ONCE I TOLD THE **AFRICAN NATION** I COULD WHACK THE LEADER OF THE ARYAN BRAND IN A WAY THAT COULD NEVER BE TRACED BACK TO THEM...

HHHKKKKKKKK...

...WE HAD NO PROBLEM CUTTING A DEAL.

MY VULTURE HARNESS IS BASICALLY AN ELECTROMAGNET, SEE.

RATHER A SIMPLE MATTER TO INCREASE THE POLARITY SO IT'S REPELLED BY THE EARTH'S OWN MAGNETIC FIELD...

SO...

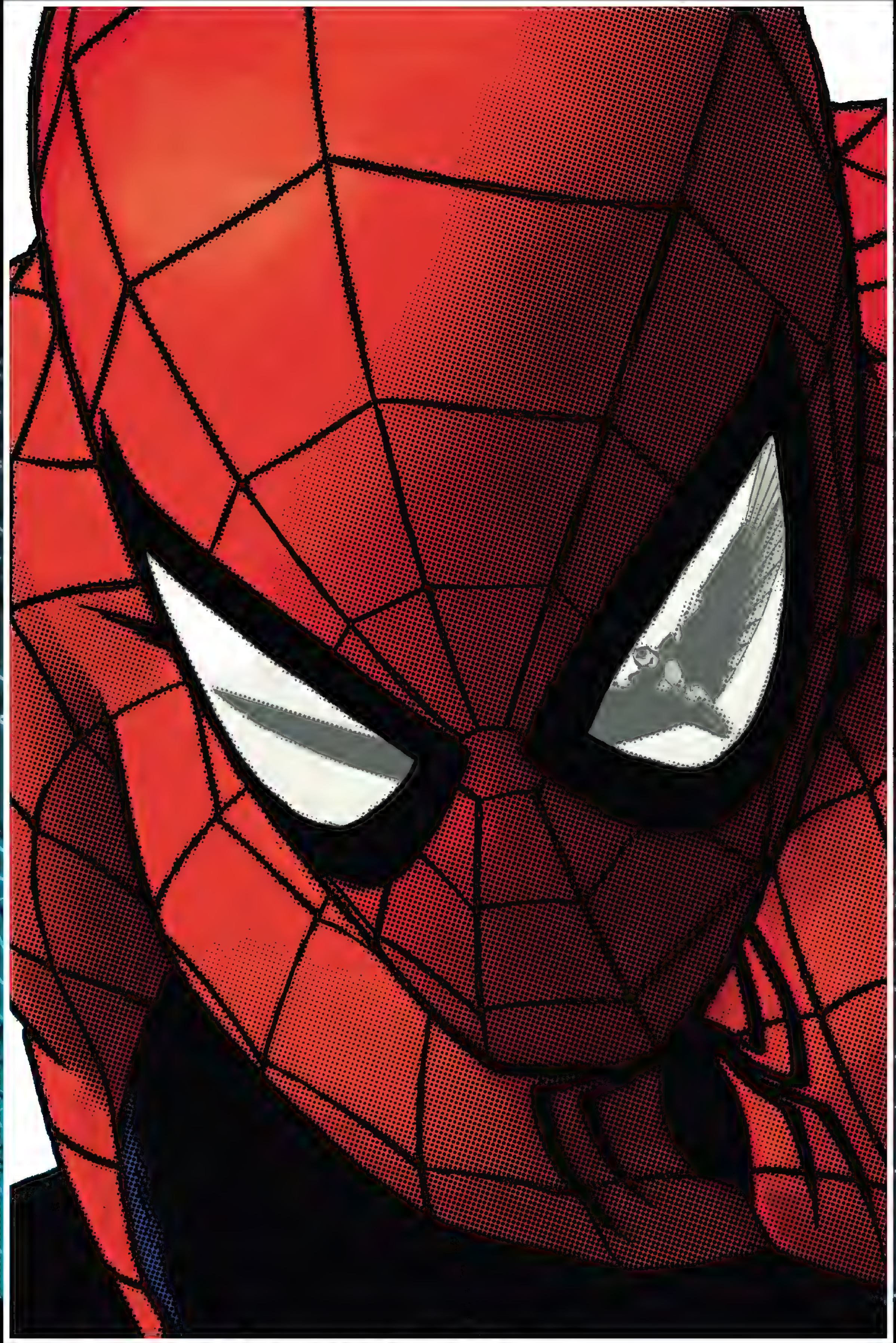
GOT YOUR ATTENTION?

LIGHTS OUT, TOOMES!

KLANGG

MAKE A WISH...

End.



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #623

RYKER'S ISLAND SUPERMAX PENITENTIARY.

TWENTY-FOOT FENCES, RAZOR WIRE, SEARCHLIGHTS, FULL-SPECTRUM VIDEO, MOTION SENSORS, X-RAY SCANNERS, SHOCK-MINES.

AND THAT'S JUST THE *OUTSIDE.* *INSIDE* ITS SIX-INCH-THICK ADAMANTIUM-ALLOY WALLS IS THE BEST HOLDING TECH REED RICHARDS CAN *DESIGN* AND STARK INDUSTRIES CAN *BUILD.*

MAY AS WELL BE A CARDBOARD *BOX.*

SCAVENGING
PART ONE

THAT'S THE KIND OF *CONTEMPT* I HAVE FOR THIS PLACE. EVEN FOR A *PRISON*, IT'S DEPRESSING.

...COVER FOR ME THURSDAY? I GOT A NIGHT CLASS.

TRYIN' TO EDUCATE YOURSELF INTO A NEW *CAREER*, HUH? I THINK SO. LEMME CHECK WITH THE WIFE.

I MEAN, EVEN THE *GUARDS* WANT OUT.

BUT AFTER SPENDING A WEEK WITH *CHAMELEON* WHILE THAT OBSESSIVE *CONTROL FREAK* AGONIZED OVER HIS PLAN FOR *"THE PERFECT BREAK-OUT..."*

...*RYKER'S* FEELS LIKE A *VACATION RESORT* BY COMPARISON.

CHAMELEON'S SUCH A *CREEP.*

AHHHHH!

EEEYAHH!

ALWAYS HANDS THE GRUNT WORK *OFF* TO SOMEONE.

THAT FIFTY-TIME *LOSER*, TELLING ME--*ELECTRO*--HOW TO BREAK SOMEONE OUT...

...OUT OF A JOINT I'VE SPENT HALF MY *ADULT LIFE* IN.

BEEN COMING HERE SO LONG, THE *NEWER* GUARDS ARE LOOKING LIKE *KIDS*, AND THE *OLDER* ONES...

I *RECOGNIZE* YOU. CARLYLE, RIGHT?

YESSIR. I--I'M A *SUPPORTER*. YOUR "*POWER TO THE PEOPLE*" MOVEMENT WAS *INSPIRATIONAL*.

I *AGREE*, WE *NEED* TO TAKE THE COUNTRY BACK FROM FAT CATS AND ELITISTS AND I WAS *ALWAYS* GOOD TO YOU WHEN YOU WERE HERE AND *DON'TKILLMEPLEASE*.

ISSUES #612-614 --SOCIALLY AWARE STEVE.

WELL...WITH ALL YOUR ALARMS AND COMMUNICATIONS FRIED, I GUESS YOU'RE IN NO POSITION TO DOUBLE-CROSS ME.

NO, SIR. AND I WOULDN'T.

I'LL MAKE IT LOOK LIKE YOU ROUGHED ME UP. THEY'LL NEVER KNOW.

DONE THIS *BEFORE*, HAVE YOU?

ALL RIGHT, CARLYLE. MAYBE DOWN THE LINE WE CAN USE AN INSIDE MAN.

NOW COVER YOUR EYES.

KZZZAAAK

RIGHT WHERE THEY SAID YOU'D BE.

OH, YOU'RE THE NEW *VULTURE*, NO MISTAKE. SOMETHING TELLS ME I SHOULD BE GLAD MY SENSE OF *SMELL* IS GONE.

BUT YOU CAN'T BE ANY WORSE TO WORK WITH THAN THE *OLD* VULTURE. THE *LARRY DAVID* LOOK-ALIKE.

GOD, I HATE *EVERYONE* TODAY. WHY *IS* THAT?

ANYWAY...

TIME TO *FLY*, BIRDIE.

THAP

SHUK

NOT.

FUNNY.

GAZE YOU *WELL*, SPIDER-MAN, UPON THE SIGHT OF A MAN WHO FULLY EMBRACES HIS *DESTINY!*

WITH *PIES?*

LOOK, I'M IN *NO MOOD* TO STAR IN YOUR LITTLE *ELECTRIC COMPANY* SKIT.

YOU SEEK TO RIDICULE *ME?* TO MORTIFY *ME?*

BAH! HUMILIATION IS LIKE *LOVE*...LIKE *COMPASSION!* IT IS A THING ONLY FOR *LESSER* MEN. WHAT IS *HUMILIATION* TO

SIMPLE SIMON?

I THINK THE *ANSWER* IS IN THE *QUESTION.* NOW, HOLD THAT *POSE--*

THWIP!

--AND LET'S *TALK!*

THWAP!

?

AAAH!

I'M SORRY I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T *MEAN* ANYTHING! JUST TRYING TO CATCH A *BREAK!*

LUCKY FOR *YOU*, I'M IN THE MOOD TO *GIVE* ONE!

NOSE OR *RIBS?*

WAIT! I MEAN MY *TELEVISION* BREAK! ON *"TO BE A VILLAIN!"* THE *REALITY* SHOW!

YOU MEAN THERE'S SOMETHING *SKEEVIER* ON THAN *"STATEN ISLAND SHORE"* AND I HAVEN'T *SEEN* IT?

IT WON'T PREMIERE 'TIL *FALL!* BUT IT'S *LEGIT!* ALL THIS IS! THE PRODUCERS PAID FOR THE *PIES* AND BOUGHT *CITY PERMITS* AND--

PERMITS? NEW YORK IS SO HARD-UP, THEY'RE SELLING *PERMITS* FOR *THIS* KINDA CRAP?

NOT ON *MY* WATCH! I'M TAKING THIS STRAIGHT TO *CITY HALL!*

YOU REMIND YOUR *PRODUCERS* THEY DON'T HAVE A PERMIT FROM *SPIDER-MAN!*

HEY!!

NO, I DON'T NEED A LIFT! YOU'RE WELCOME, YOU WEIRDO!

GREAT.

THE *BOSS* IS GOING TO WANT ME TO GO *AFTER* HIM, I *KNOW* IT...

HEY, MISS KRAVEN, I UNCORKED THE *VULTURE* AS PER ORDERS, BUT--

HE GOT AWAY FROM YOU.

NEVER MIND, ELECTRO. YOU DID WELL. IT'S QUITE ENOUGH FOR OUR PURPOSES...

"...THAT THE *VULTURE* IS IN PLAY."

KUNNCH

HUHHE HUHHE

SKEEK SKEEK

AAH!

City Hall.

GUNNH!

BRE-E-EEP

GHAH! THIS BLASTED PHONE!

IT'S STUCK! BUT HOW--?

BRE-E-EEP

BRE-E-EEP

--IT'S LIKE SOMEBODY GLUED--

BRE-E-EEP

BRE-E-EEP

BRE-E-EEP

SPIDER-MAN!

YOU CAN'T KEEP DOING THIS $#!@ TO ME! I'M THE MAYOR OF #@&!% NEW YORK! DO YOU #@&!% HEAR ME?

YEP! *SEE* YOU, TOO!

I CAME TO GIVE YOU A PIECE OF MY MIND ABOUT LEASING YOUR SOUL OUT TO ***REALITY TELEVISION,*** YOU OLD GOAT, BUT THIS IS MORE ***FUN.***

KLIK!

INSTEAD, I HAVE YET *ANOTHER* PRECIOUS MOMENT FOR MY *TIRADE SCRAPBOOK* CAPTURED IN FIVE MEGAPIXEL GLORY.

PHOTOGRAPHY, YOU'RE NOT JUST A *CAREER*... YOU'RE MY LIFELINE TO *SANITY.*

Downtown.

DMITRI, I GOT JOEY ON THE LINE WITH US. THERE'S A *SITUATION.*

THE *VULTURE* BROKE OUTTA *JAIL,* BUT HE HASN'T CHECKED *IN.* I CAN'T GUARANTEE THAT HE'S FEELING TOO... *WARMLY* TOWARD US, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

IF HE GOES OFF THE *RESERVATION.* LOOK, WITH THE *KARNELLIS* AND THE *MANFREDIS* DOWN, WE'RE POSITIONED TO BE THE *POWER FAMILY* IN THIS CITY. SO WE GOTTA *PROTECT* OURSELVES.

NEW YORK'S CRIME FAMILIES ARE IN DISARRAY FOLLOWING THE VENGEANCE OF MYSTERIO IN ISSUES #618-620.

YOU'RE NOT TALKING *PLAN J* YET, ARE YOU? TAKE IT EASY, FRANCIS. WE DON'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING CRAZY.

FOR ALL WE KNOW, NOTHING'S CHANGED AND WE CAN STILL *USE* VULTURE.

DMITRI'S GOT A POINT. WE ACT *AGAINST* HIM, THAT DRAWS HIM OUT AND HE'S NOT OUR *SECRET WEAPON* NO MORE.

WHICH WOULD BE SAD IF HE'S NOT REALLY SO MAD AT US.

H'LO? FRANCIS, YOU STILL THERE? WHAT'S THAT NOISE?

GOSSIP

VULTURE!

HE GOT THE BOSS! *HE GOT THE BOSS!*

BUDDUDDUP DUDDUDDUD DUDD

OKAY. HE *IS* OUT FOR BLOOD. HE'S *REMEMBERING.*

NO *CHOICE* NOW. WE LAUNCH *PLAN J.*

Soon.

JIMMY. COME +KOFF+ COME ON. WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE.

WE ALWAYS BEEN GOOD TO YOU, RIGHT? RIGHT?

LET ME WALK OUT, WE'LL GO BACK TO THE WAY IT WAS.

SKREE

SKREE

SKREEEE

HAUUGH

EEEEE

SLICH

...WHAT...

...WHAT DO YOU WANT, JIMMY...?

AAAAHH!

DON'T NO JIMMY PLEASE NOT THE ACID

WHYYY--

--DEE-ID YOUUU--

--MAAY-EK MEEE?

OH, MY GOD, JIMMY. YOU CAN HARDLY TALK.

I DIDN'T KNOW, I SWEAR.

=HUNH=

KRAASH

YOU *REMEMBER*, RIGHT? YOU USED TO TALK SO *GOOD*.

YOU DID *EVERYTHING* GOOD...

"WE USED TO SAY, '*JIMMY NATALE? HE CAN FIX ANYTHING.*' YOU LOOKED *OUT* FOR US."

JIMMY? YOU GOT TO COME *OVER*.

"REMEMBER THAT THING WITH ME AND JOEY'S *COUSIN?* I'D BE *DEAD* IF IT WEREN'T FOR YOU."

JIMMY! JIMMY, IT JUST *HAPPENED*, I DIDN'T *MEAN* TO, IF THE KARNELLIS *FIND OUT*--

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD USE A *DRINK*, FRANCIS.

GO *GET* ONE SOMEPLACE.

I'LL HANDLE *THIS*.

"EVEN AFTER YOU BECAME...WHAT YOU *ARE*...WHEN YOU STARTED PREYING UPON THE *WEAKEST* OF US...

"THAT WAS GOOD FOR *EVERYBODY*. WE *RESPECT* AND *APPRECIATE* YOU. YOU THIN OUT THE *LOSERS*, JIMMY."

Sal's DELI

SAL'S

WHYYY DEE-ID YOUUU--

WE DIDN'T DO THIS TO YOU! WE DIDN'T!

LET ME *LIVE* AND I'LL TELL YOU--

WHOOO?

JAMESON!

IT WAS J. JONAH JAMESON!

-UNNH-

LIVE

BREAKING NEWS

IS THE MAYOR A SECRET CRIME BOSS

NEW YORK CITY IS ROCKED AT THIS HOUR BY ACCUSATIONS TYING ITS MAYOR, MILLIONAIRE J. JONAH JAMESON, TO THE CREATION OF ANOTHER SUPER-CRIMINAL.

PROF. CHARLES GOSS, A BIO-CHEMIST ATTACHED TO EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY, IS CLAIMING TO AUTHORITIES THAT MAYOR J. JONAH JAMESON HIRED HIM--

--TO TRANSFORM AN INNOCENT MAN INTO THE RECENTLY-ESCAPED SERIAL KILLER WHO IS THE LATEST TO GO BY THE NAME VULTURE.

LIVE

SCORPION FUN

BOX NEWS channel

JAMESON WEATHERED A SIMILAR SCANDAL A FEW YEARS BACK WHEN HE PUBLICLY ADMITTED FUNDING THE CREATION OF THE SCORPION.

SID, WE HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT EVEN A PUBLIC OFFICIAL IS INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY BY--

DOESN'T MATTER! JAMESON CAN BE ACQUITTED, AWARDED THE NOBEL AND WIN THE PENNANT, BUT HE HAS A HISTORY OF SUPER-CRIMINAL ASSOCIATIONS! HIS POLITICAL CAREER WILL BE DEAD IN THE WATER!

WELL, THAT'S OBVIOUS. THESE INEVITABLE INVESTIGATIONS SPELL THE END OF MAYOR JAMESON.

Times Square.

MAN, CAN'T BELIEVE IT TOOK FIVE AVENGERS, TWO HULKS AND HOWARD STERN TO GET CLOTHES ON THAT NAKED COWBOY.

GUESS I CAN CALL IT A--

HEYNOW *WHAT?*

NO. NO. NO. NO. NO.

"TIED TO THE *VULTURE?*" J.J.'S A JERK AND AN IDIOT, *GIVEN,* BUT *THAT'S* NOT *TRUE!* THIS SCREAMS *FRAME-UP!*

SECRET CRIME BOSS?

YAHOO!

NO TURNS

NEW YORK POLICE DEPT

REPLAY

DEAR LADY LUCK: HOW MANY MORE DIRECTIONS CAN YOU KEEP *HAMMERING* ME FROM?

THESE LAST FEW WEEKS IN *PARTICULAR* HAVE REALLY GROUND ME *DOWN,* WHAT WITH THE DB DESTROYED AND EVERYTHING *ELSE...*

I NEED A *WIN* FOR ONCE! JUST *ONE!* AND THIS IS GONNA BE *IT!* JONAH MAY BE-- *IS*--THE CHEAPEST, MOST ARROGANT, MOST ANNOYING *CARBON-BASED LIFEFORM* IN THE *GALAXY...*

...BUT EVEN *HE* DESERVES NOT TO BE *SMEARED!*

IT'S WAY AFTER *HOURS.* GRACIE MANSION IS *CLOSED.* BUT IT'S JONAH'S *HOME...*

"...SO HE'S BOUND TO BE THERE!"

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS CITY?

J. JONAH JAMESON IS AN *HONEST MAN!* I WAS SO STRAIGHTFORWARD ABOUT THE WHOLE *SCORPION* DEAL BACK IN THE DAY, I MADE *GEORGE WASHINGTON* LOOK LIKE *BARON MUNCHAUSEN!*

AND *THIS* IS THE RESPECT I GET?

MAYBE *THAT* WAS MY MISTAKE! EXPOSING MY FUNDAMENTAL *DECENCY* SO 8.3 MILLION SLACK-JAWED *LOWLIFES* COULD *SPIT* ALL OVER IT!

THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK LOVE YOU *BACK,* YOUR HONOR.

SPEAKING AS THE *POLICE COMMISSIONER,* I PROMISE THIS COULD STILL TURN OUR WAY. MY DETECTIVES ARE INTERVIEWING THIS PROFESSOR GOSS. IF THEY CAN FIND A *HOLE* IN HIS STORY--

IF! IF!

SO WHAT ARE WE DOING TO APPREHEND THIS *WINGED MENACE* IN THE MEANTIME, VALENTIN?

EVERYTHING WE CAN, SIR. BUT I'M TOLD IT COULD TAKE A WHILE, THAT HE NEVER SHOWS IN PUBLIC.

MOST OTHER FUGITIVES COULD SLIP UP AND BE SEEN AT SOME GAS STATION OR CONVENIENCE STORE, BUT THIS CHARACTER--

FIND HIM!

CLIP HIS WINGS!

AND TICKLE HIM WITH HIS OWN FEATHERS IF YOU HAVE TO UNTIL HE TELLS THE WORLD I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM!

GET ME THE VULTURE!

klim

WHYYYYY?

GHAAH!

HURRRR!

MY GOD! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WHYYY DEE-ID YOUUUU MAY-EEK ME?

YOU, TOO? I DIDN'T--

HAS THE WHOLE WORLD GONE INSANE?

I'LL KEEE-ILL YOUUU--

THWAP

THWAP

GLAD I SWUNG BACK *BY!*

FEET OFF THE MAYOR'S *DESK*, VULCHY! RESPECT THE *OFFICE* IF NOT THE *MAN!*

'CAUSE THAT'S HOW I GET BY.

SPIDER-MAN!

YOU'RE IN THIS, *TOO!* I SHOULD HAVE *KNOWN* YOU'D BE IN CAHOOTS WITH THAT *KILLER!*

OH, FOR PETE'S *SAKE*, JONAH--

--DON'T YOU *EVER* GET TIRED OF BEING *YOU?* AND STOP WAVING THAT *FIREPLACE POKER* AROUND BEFORE YOU PUT AN *EYE* OUT!

JUST STAY UNDER THE *DESK* WHILE I RISK MY BUTT TO SAVE *YOURS! AGAIN!*

WHOA!

HAUUGH

AW, *GEEZ*--AGAIN WITH THE *PUKING!*

YOU KNOW WHAT I JUST *REALIZED?*

I MISS THE *OLD* VULTURE.

SURE, THERE WAS THAT *BEN-GAY-AND-FIXODENT* SMELL TO PUT UP WITH--

--BUT YOU COULD ACTUALLY HAVE A *CONVERSATION* WITH THE GUY--

--WITHOUT HIM ALWAYS *SPEWING* ALL OVER EVERYTHING!

VULTURE?

JONAH?

UH-OH.

YOU! WHICH WAY DID THEY GO?

AAIEEE!

THEY MUST HAVE COME THROUGH HERE! WHICH WAY?

COME ON, SPIDER-SPEED...

THERE!

JONAH! IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, FIND COVER!

HERE I COME TO SAVE THE--

JONAH!

To Be Continued!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #624

City Hall.
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

JONAH!

?

I JUST--
I THOUGHT
THAT WAS--

JONAH, WHOEVER THIS MAN IS, GET HIM SOME *HELP!*

HURRY!

KRSH

ENOUGH IS *ENOUGH*, VULTURE! I'M *ON* YOU LIKE A COAT OF *PAINT!*

IF YOU FELL FOR THIS *FRAME-UP* ABOUT *JONAH* BEING THE ONE WHO MADE YOU A MONSTER, THEN *BACK AWAY*, BECAUSE EVEN *HE'S* NOT *THAT--*

NUTS!

KUCCH

AGAIN WITH THE SPEWING.

OKAY, SPIDEY, YOU'RE NOT GONNA WIN AN *AERIAL BATTLE* WITH THIS MANIAC.

KEEP THE BATTLE ON *YOUR TURF* AND *YOUR TERMS*, OR ELSE YOU'RE *DEAD*.

FINE, FREAKFACE! IT'S ON, WITH A *SIDE BET!*

I'LL WAGER YOU A WHOLE HANDFUL OF *TIC TACS--*

--THAT YOU RUN OUT OF =BLEEGH= *STOMACH ACID--*

THWIP

--BEFORE I RUN OUT OF *WEBS!*

AND I'VE GOT A *LOT* OF *WEBS!*

SEE WHAT I *MEAN?*

OR CAN'T YOU SEE MUCH OF *ANYTHING* WITHOUT UPCHUCKING ON YOUR *OWN FACE?*

THAAAAT'S IT, VULCHY...KEEP FLYING *BLIND* FOR JUST ANOTHER *SECOND* WHILE I *RELOAD,* ANNND...

AWW. POOW WIDDLE FWYING FWEAK WAN INTO MOWE WEBS!

FANS, HOW DOES SPIDEY DO IT? JUST WHEN THE VULTURE THINKS HE'S GETTING SOMEWHERE--

--THE WORLD'S MOST AMAZING *ARACHNID* BLOCKS HIM WITH ANOTHER IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF FIRST-CLASS *WEBBERY!*

NOW BACK TO THE PLAY-BY-PLAY!

THWIP!

THWIP!

VULTURE PIVOTS *NORTH*--BUT HE'S BLOCKED *IN!*

VULTURE TURNS *SOUTH*--

--AND *OH, NO!* HE'S *BOXED IN,* LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

HAS THE PINIONED PUKER MET A *DEAD END?*

WE MIGHT NEED A CALL TO THE BOOTH ON THIS ONE!

WAIT A *MINUTE*! HE'S NOT GIVING UP!

HE'S POISED FOR A SUPREME *EFFORT*--REACHING DOWN INTO THE DEPTHS OF HIS--

--STOMACH--!

HUUUCH

KONNK!

SORRY YOU HAD TO *SEE* THAT, VOMIT-PHOBES!

WHILE THE GROUNDSKEEPERS CLEAN THE *NASTINESS* OFF THE FIELD...

...WE'RE GOING TO CUT TO A *COMMERCIAL!*

FANS, A TEN-MINUTE PHONE CALL CAN SAVE 10% OFF YOUR AUTO INSURANCE WITH INSURECO.

NOW, BACK TO THE GAME!

THWIP

RAAAAAHHH!

SPIDER-MAN HITS *HARD!* HE HITS *FAST!* HE LAYS IT ON *THICK*--

--AND EVEN *VULTURE* WON'T ACID-BATH HIS *OWN HANDS* TO FREE HIMSELF--

=HUCCH=

EAAAHH!

SSSSS

GHAAAH!

OKAY, NOW YOU'RE JUST DOING THE OPPOSITE OF WHATEVER I SAY, RIGHT?

TRULY I AM NO LONGER THE LUCKIEST MAN-AN-AN ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH-EARTH-EARTH.

ALL RIGHT, LET'S CHANGE THE CHANNEL! WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I FORCE-FEED WEBBING STRAIGHT DOWN YOUR *GULLET*--

WELL AIN'T THAT JUST LEMON.

THP

THP

HUUUUCH

HAVEN'T LAID DOWN *THAT* MUCH WEBBING IN ONE BOUT IN A *WHILE*. I'M *OUT!*

BACK TO *BOBBING* AND *WEAVING*--

--AND A LAST SHOT AT *REASON!*

LISTEN! NO ONE HATES *J. JONAH SKINFLINT* LIKE *YOURS TRULY* DOES--BUT FAIR'S *FAIR!*

HE *DIDN'T DO* THIS TO YOU! ADRIAN TOOMES, THE *OLD* VULTURE TOLD ME IT WAS THE *MOB* THAT DID IT!

WHO DID YOU TICK OFF *THERE?*

R-R-R!

JUST *TELL* ME, AND I'LL *HELP* YOU BRING 'EM *DOWN!*

OR NOT.

HOLD UP--!

D'AAAAH.

ME AND MY BIG *MOUTH*. NOW VULCHY'S OFF TO FACE *MOBSTERS!* PROBABLY! MAYBE!

I KNOW THEY'RE NOT THE *SWEETEST* BUNCH IN THE WORLD--

--BUT NO MATTER *WHO* HIS INTENDED VICTIM, I CAN'T JUST LET A MURDERER *GO*.

SHEESH! DOESN'T ANYBODY *NICE* EVER NEED A HERO?

SO FAR TODAY I'VE RISKED MY NECK FOR *JONAH*, WHO NEVER STOPS *BROWBEATING* ME, AND FOR THE *MOB*, WHO... WELL, THEY'RE THE *MOB*.

I WONDER IF THE *RED SKULL* NEEDS CHEERING UP?

OR MAYBE I CAN MOW DOCTOR DOOM'S *LAWN*.

OKAY... SNEAKY DOES IT...

PFT

HA! YOU BEEN SPIDER-TRACERED, VULCHY! WHEREVER YOU GO, WHATEVER YOU DO--

--I CAN TRACK YOU DOWN WITH MY SPIDER-SENSE AND--

TAK

KRK

OWWW!

SHOULDER--!

THAT'S FINE. I'VE GOT TWO ARMS. WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD I EVER NEED BOTH OF THEM?

ONCE I WHIP UP SOME NEW WEB-FLUID, IT'S ROUND TWO--

--BUT FIRST, GOD HELP ME, I OUGHT TO MAKE SURE JONAH'S ALL RIGHT.

City Hall.

I'M NOT ACCUSING YOU OF ANYTHING, MR. MAYOR. THIS ISN'T ABOUT WHAT I BELIEVE. IT ISN'T EVEN ABOUT THE *TRUTH*.

SPIT IT *OUT*, LUBECK.

IT'S JUST-- FAIR OR *NOT*, YOU'RE EVEN *MORE* CONNECTED TO THE VULTURE NOW THAT HE CAME *HERE*. THEY'RE SAYING THIS IS A *FATAL BLOW* TO YOUR *POLITICAL CAREER*--

MY *POLITICAL CAREER?*

WHO *CARES* ABOUT *THAT* RIGHT NOW? A MAN IS *DEAD!*

YOU'RE A BIGGER VULTURE THAN THAT *WINGED MENACE!* GET *OUT!*

THIS *SECURITY* GUARD, THIS...*GABRIEL GRAHAM*. HE GAVE *EVERYTHING* FOR ME, AND I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HIS *DAMN NAME*.

"HE SAW ME RUNNING *STUPIDLY* FROM THE VULTURE WAVING A *WEAPON*. HE CALMED ME DOWN AND TOOK IT *FROM* ME, SAID HE'D *PROTECT* ME.

"AND THEN...

"...AH, HELL."

HEYA, LUBECK! IS *HIZZONER* IN?

LEAVE HIM BE, PETE.

I'D ASK IF HE WAS IN A *MOOD*, BUT THAT WOULD BE LIKE ASKING IF WATER WAS *WET*.

DON'T JOKE. JONAH'S IN *MOURNING* FOR A *GOOD MAN*. THE VULTURE *FOUGHT* JONAH, THEN *KILLED* ONE OF HIS *SECURITY TEAM* JUST A FEW YARDS *AWAY* FROM WHERE WE'RE *STANDING*.

I...HEARD. I FEEL AWFUL.

RIGHT NOW, JONAH PROBABLY WON'T CARE WHAT *YOU* HAVE TO SAY. HE DOESN'T EVEN CARE ABOUT KEEPING HIS *JOB*.

WOW. I'VE KNOWN JONAH *FOREVER*, BUT THESE RARE GLIMPSES OF HIS *HUMAN* SIDE STILL KNOCK ME OUT.

WOW.

SO...IF THE VULTURE AND JONAH REALLY WENT *TOE-TO-TOE*, THAT *EXONERATES* JJJ, RIGHT? THERE'S AT LEAST *THAT*.

NOT WITH NO *WITNESSES*. IT'S JUST JONAH'S *WORD* THAT HE WAS ACTUALLY *ATTACKED* AND NOT SIMPLY PULLING *STRINGS*.

MAYBE I CAN *HELP* HIM. I WAS... UMMM..

...I WAS *AROUND* AFTER HOURS. I...*MIGHT* HAVE GOTTEN A *SHOT* THAT PROVES HE'S *INNOCENT!*

WHAT? THAT'D BE *GREAT!* LET'S GET YOU A *WORKSTATION! HURRY!*

WHY'D I BLURT *THAT* OUT?

MAYBE I'VE GONE *SOFT* ON THE OLD BULLY 'CAUSE I THOUGHT FOR A MINUTE HE'D BEEN *MURDERED*...

...BUT I CAN'T LET HIM BE *RUINED* OVER A *LIE*. NOT WHEN I KNOW THE *TRUTH*.

IF I'D ONLY STOPPED TO *SHOOT* THE FIGHT BETWEEN JONAH AND THE VULTURE, THAT WOULD SOLVE *EVERYTHING*--

--BUT OL' IRONHEART SHOULDN'T HAVE TO GO *DOWN* BECAUSE I BLEW A KODAK MOMENT. I KNOW *PRECISELY* WHAT I *SAW* WITH MY OWN TWO *EYES*...

Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Select Filter Anal

...AND WITH A *FILE PHOTO* AND A LITTLE *COMPUTER HELP*, I CAN *RECAPTURE* ONE SPECIFIC MOMENT *EXACTLY* AS IT HAPPENED...!

Elsewhere.
SEVERAL MILES UP THE HUDSON RIVER.
PLEASE...
I'M *TELLING* YOU, IT WAS *JAMESON* WHO DID THIS TO YOU...
AAH!
SHIK
BUT IT'S THE *TRUTH*, I *SWEAR* IT...
HURR URR URRR!
AIEEEE!
STOP! OKAY! JUST LEAVE HER *ALONE!*
I'LL TELL YOU *EVERYTHING*, JIMMY...FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE...

"YOU REMEMBER? WHO YOU *WERE?*

"*JIMMY THE FIXER.* ONE OF THE BOYS GOT IN A *SCRAPE*, YOU'D GET 'IM OUT OF IT.

"ANYTHING THAT MIGHT REFLECT *BADLY* ON US, YOU GOT RID OF IT.

"YOU DID YOUR *JOB*. YOU DID IT *GOOD*.

"BUT IT WAS A LOT OF *PRESSURE*, AND YOU COULDN'T GO ON DOIN' IT THE SAME WAY *FOREVER*."

WITH ALL DUE *RESPECT*, I'M GETTING *BOGGED DOWN* HERE. WE GOT TOO MANY INEXPERIENCED MEN GETTING INTO TOO MANY STUPID SITUATIONS.

I NEED YOUR PERMISSION TO MAYBE THIN THE *HERD* A LITTLE. WEED THE *SLACKERS* OUT WHEN THEY GET TO BE A *BURDEN*...

...AND STRIKE A LITTLE *MOTIVATIONAL FEAR* INTO THE *REST*.

LEMME SHOW YOU WHAT I'VE GOT IN *MIND*.

WAY OUT

THIS IS PROFESSOR CHARLIE GOSS.

CHARLIE, FORGET YOU EVER *SAW* THESE MEN.

CHARLIE... LET'S SAY HE *"FELL INTO"* SOME SCIENCE JUNK USED BY THESE *BROTHERS* WHO CREATED *THE SCORPION* AND-- WHO WAS IT, CHARLIE?

THE *FLY.*

BUT *WE'RE* LOOKING AT A NEW *VULTURE.* PREY ON THE *WEAK* ONES, RIGHT, JIMMY?

RIGHT. AS I SEE IT, OUR VULTURE'S GOT TO BE QUICK, ATHLETIC AND MAYBE ON THE *RUTHLESS* SIDE.

ALL *YOU* FELLAS NEED TO DO IS *FUND* THIS AND BRING GOSS THE RIGHT *CANDIDATE.* I'LL SEE TO THE *REST.*

DON'T *BOTHER,* JIMMY.

AAAAAH!

BAM!

WE ALREADY *GOT* THE PERFECT MAN FOR THE JOB.

CHANGE HIM!

BUT I WASN'T *PLANNING* ON THIS SO *SOON*--

DO IT!

MUTATION

WHATEVER YOU *SAY*.

TIK TAK TIK

EEYAAAHHH!

SKILL

"YA SEE JIMMY, SOME OF THE BIGGER MAGGIA GUYS HAD BEEN USING THAT BOWL-HEADED MYSTERIO GUY TO CLEAN UP THEIR MESSES, SO WE FIGURED WHY NOT COME UP WITH OUR OWN SECRET WEAPON.

UHHH... HUHHH...

"GOSS PROMISED US THAT BETWEEN THE *OPERATION* AND THE *PAIN*, IT'D WIPE YOUR MEMORY *CLEAN*. NO *REPRISALS*. BUT WHAT WE NEVER *COUNTED* ON...

"...WAS YOU GOIN' *ROGUE!*"

BINGO! I'VE LOCKED ONTO YOU, VULTURE!

HEY, FANGFACE! COME OUT AND PLAY! I KNOW YOU'RE...

...

...HERE...

NUTS!

SKRAAK

"I TOLD YOU WHAT YOU WANTED TO KNOW, NOW PLEASE."

DON'T.

I'M *BEGGING* YOU.

IN THE NAME OF THE *FAMILY*. FOR WHAT WE WENT *THROUGH*. PLEASE.

JIMMY.

WHERE ARE YOU, VULTURE?

WHERE?

FRONT LINE

...day, May 12 2020

...E PHOTO THAT SAVED A MAYOR

82% NOW SAY JJJ NOT GUILTY

Maximum Wage Law Succeeds

Salary Caps with Help Stabalize Economy

TREASURY ANNOUNCES "TRUE COST" TAX PLAN

Ex-Secreta... Apologizes... W.M.D. S...

300,000 Troops Nee...

WELL...*THAT* WAS A WASTED NIGHT. I WEBBED IT HALFWAY TO THE *BRONX* AND BACK, AND NOT A *SIGN* OF REDWING. I BET I LOOK LIKE FIVE MILES OF BAD ROAD THIS MORNING.

STILL, MAYBE TODAY'LL BE BRIGHTER, BECAUSE...

HEY! LOOK WHO'S *HERE!*

THE MAN WHO *SAVED THE JAMESON ADMINISTRATION!*

AND OUR JOBS!

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

CONGRATS, PETE--AND *THANKS!*

THANK YOU, *THANK* YOU, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! AND NOW, ASSUMING OUR PERPETUALLY GRUMPY MAYOR IS *EQUALLY* AS HAPPY ABOUT THIS--

--HERE IT IS, YOUR MOMENT OF ZEN.

MORNING, YOUR HONOR! BEAUTIFUL *DAY,* ISN'T--

PARKER. GOOD TIMING. COME WITH *ME.*

AND LEAVE THE *CAMERA.* YOU WON'T *NEED* IT.

AH, RIGHT. YOU'RE...

...WELCOME? I GUESS?

PRESS CONFERENCE? WHAT ARE WE *DOING* HERE? LOOK, JONAH, I DON'T NEED A *PUBLIC* THANK YOU...JUST RENAMING A STREET AFTER ME WILL SUFFICE.

I *KNOW* THIS ISN'T A DREAM, BECAUSE I'M WEARING *PANTS*.

SIT DOWN, PARKER.

SIT DOWN, PARKER.

EXCELSIOR

MEMBERS OF THE PRESS, I WANT TO *BEGIN* BY REAFFIRMING MY *INNOCENCE* IN THIS *VULTURE* MATTER.

YOU ALL KNOW *PETER PARKER*. HIS PHOTOGRAPH OF A *KEY MOMENT* MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN GETTING THE PUBLIC TO *LISTEN* TO MY PROTESTS--

--AND AS A *RESULT, ADDITIONAL* EVIDENCE AND WITNESSES HAVE COME FORTH TO FULLY CLEAR ME.

BUT BACK TO *PARKER*. I'VE WORKED WITH HIM SINCE HE WAS A *KID* IN *SCHOOL*. I MADE HIM MY *STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER* HERE. I *BELIEVED* IN HIM.

WHICH MAKES IT ALL THE MORE *HEARTBREAKING* FOR ME TO HAVE TO *TELL* YOU--

--HIS *PICTURE* IS *PHONY*. A *MOCK-UP*.

WHAT?

MR. MAYOR--!

I WAS A *NEWSPAPERMAN*. I DEVOTED MY *LIFE* TO THE *TRUTH*.

BUT THIS PHOTO WAS *FAKED*. AND I *CANNOT* SUPPORT A *LIE*, NOT EVEN TO SAVE MY OWN *SKIN*.

PARKER'S *INTENTIONS* MAY HAVE BEEN *GOOD*...BUT HIS *ETHICS* ARE *DEPLORABLE*.

AND THAT IS WHY, EFFECTIVE *IMMEDIATELY*, I AM *FIRING* PETER PARKER FROM MY PAYROLL...

...AND *STRONGLY* ADVISING *EVERY* HONEST ORGANIZATION, NEWS OR *OTHERWISE*, TO STAY *WELL AWAY* FROM HIM.

THIS MAN HAS VIOLATED A *BASIC TRUST* OF THE *PUBLIC*...AND HIS CAREER IS *FINISHED*.

B-BUT... BUT...

YOU. A-V BOY. GET THAT WORTHLESS PICTURE UP ON THE SCREEN AND DIM THE LIGHTS.

I WANT TO SHOW EVERYONE--

"WORTH-LESS"?

LOOK. SEE THAT?

THE FORMER MAYOR'S KIDS, FRAMED IN GOLD. SPOILED BRATS, NEVER COULD STAND THE SIGHT OF THEM.

AND YOU CAN BET YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S TEETH THAT PORTRAIT CAME OFF MY WALL ON THE DAY I TOOK OFFICE.

JONAH, I--

SHUT UP!

PLUS, WE CHECKED SECURITY RECORDS. PARKER WASN'T SIGNED IN AT THE TIME THE PHOTO WOULD HAVE TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN.

HE WASN'T EVEN HERE.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY FOR YOURSELF, PARKER?

PARKER!

CITY OF NEW YORK

THE *DAILY BUGLE.*

THEY'RE FINALLY CARTING OFF THE *RUBBLE.*

SOMEDAY, THEY'LL PUT UP A *NEW* STRUCTURE IN ITS *PLACE.*

WHICH IS MORE THAN I CAN MANAGE FOR *ME.*

I'VE LOST MY *CAREER*...MY WINDOW TO *ACTION*... AND THE ONLY REAL *ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY* I EVER *HAD.*

ALL BECAUSE I DID A STUPID THING FOR ALL THE *RIGHT REASONS*...

...AND I CAN'T CLEAR MYSELF WITHOUT REVEALING WHO I AM UNDER THIS MASK.

FOR THE *FIRST TIME,* THE PUBLIC IS MORE EAGER TO STRING UP *PETER PARKER* THAN *SPIDER-MAN.*

AUNT MAY... *ALL MY FRIENDS*... WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO *SAY?*

WHAT DO I DO *NOW?*

"HOW DID I LOSE *THIS* BADLY?

"HOW MUCH WORSE CAN MY LIFE *GET?*"

Next:
Much Worse!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #625

I AM PATIENT. I AM EVER VIGILANT

I AM WILLING TO SUFFER

FOR THE GREAT ALWAYS SUFFER BEFORE THEY CAN ASCEND

MY ANGEL TELLS ME THIS SHE PROMISES THAT MY WORK DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED

SHE ENCOURAGES ME TO HONE MY SKILLS. TO ENDURE THE DEMANDS OF SMALLER MEN UNTIL THE TIME OF MY CALLING IS AT HAND

I LOVE MY ANGEL

H-HEY... RHINO?

YOU CANNOT CALL ME THAT YET.

O-OKAY, BUT... YOU...

PHONE.

GIVE.

KA-BOOM

YES?

I KNOW WHERE HE WILL BE.

I KNOW HOW TO PUT THE RHINO BACK INTO HIS SKIN.

IT IS TIME.

THANK YOU, MY ANGEL.

BDEET BDEEET

C'MON, PICK UP.

BDEET BDEEET

HELLO?

HEY...HI!

OH...HI.

UNEMPLOYED LINE UP HERE

HEY, THAT'S YOU.

WHERE ARE YOU? I CAN BARELY HEAR YOU.

As Mayor Jameson's photographer, Parker doctored this photo and perhaps many others.

WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED, IT'S ALWAYS CRAZY.

I BET. DID YOU GET MY MESSAGE?

YOU LEFT ME A MESSAGE?

YEAH, I--NEVER MIND.

CAN I... I KNOW THIS IS OUT OF NOWHERE, BUT...CAN I COME SEE YOU?

PETER...

LOOKIT THIS CHUMP. PROBABLY PLANNIN' HIS NEXT SCAM.

YOU'VE SEEN, RIGHT? THE NEWS? "PARKERGATE"? HEH...

I JUST WANTED TO HANG WITH SOMEONE, YOU KNOW. A FRIEND.

YOU HAVE FRIENDS. CALL HARRY. CALL THE CAT.

I BET SHE DOESN'T READ MUCH.

...

FOR REAL?

WE'VE BARELY SAID A DOZEN WORDS TO ONE ANOTHER SINCE I GOT BACK, PETE.

NOW YOU HAVE A LAPSE IN PROFESSIONAL JUDGMENT* AND I'M SUPPOSED TO JUST INVITE YOU OVER FOR AN ANGST DUMP...?

I'M NOT TRYING TO BE MEAN. BUT IF YOU TAKE A STEP BACK--

I KNOW... YOU'RE NOT. YOU'RE NOT BEING MEAN...

I'M SORRY. HONESTLY... ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU THREW YOURSELF UNDER THE BUS FOR *JAMESON* OF ALL PEOPLE, BUT--

NO, MJ, YOU'RE RIGHT. THIS WAS DUMB. I'M NOT THINKING RIGHT... ABOUT ANYTHING, REALLY... SORRY.

STOP APOLOGIZING.

OKAY, SORRY...JUST PROMISE ME ONE THING?

THAT WE'LL TALK...REALLY TALK SOMETIME SOON?

...

I'D LIKE THAT, TIGER.

I GOTTA GO. BYE.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

We are supposed to be OBJECTIVE in this job. I get it.

Silent observers who report and bring the news to you, gentle readers; unblemished and pristine.

HEY!

That's not happening today. Sorry. Go wrap a fish if you don't like it. Or grow a pair and read at your own risk. But remember...

You can't UNKNOW once you know.

*PETER WAS CAUGHT FAKING A PICTURE TO CLEAR JONAH'S NAME LAST ISSUE.--WACKER

It begins with a favor. A friend of mine has fallen on some bad luck, and being the blonde saint I am, I threw him a bone. Some work at today's U.S. naturalization ceremony.

When you're surrounded by people who busted their collective tuchases to become American, it's tough to feel grumpy.

But no good deed goes unpunished. Remember that, it's the theme of my piece. Norah Winters is all about the subtle.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

YOU'RE SURE ABOUT THIS, NORAH?

WHAT URICH DOESN'T KNOW WON'T HURT HIM...

I MEAN, YOU DID SCREW THE POOCH WITH THE WHOLE DOCTORED PHOTO THING, BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE YOU HITLER.

BESIDES, IF YOU EVER GROW THE GRAPES TO ASK ME OUT, YOU'LL NEED THE DOUGH. I'M A *HEAVY* DRINKER.

THANK YOU, MRS. DELICATE.

ANY TIME, MR. HEARST.

LOOK AT THEM, GLORY... *129 NEW TAX-PAYERS ALL. OFFICIALLY.*

EVERY NEW CITIZEN IS LIKE A TINY MONOPOLY MAN WITH AN ACCENT.

YOU'RE A REAL PATRIOT, JONAH.

OKAY, DO YOUR THING, I'LL BE TALKING TO THE McMERICANS.

HEH YOU GOT...

...IT.

SPIDEY-SENSE GOING--OH NO. NOT THEM...

...ALEKSEI SYTSEVICH... *RHINO.*

Himself an immigrant, who came to America to wreak havoc for a government that hardly even exists any more.

Now here's what we DIDN'T know. Parked out among the bright and shiny new patriots was a fellow of questionable background.

AND THERE'S HIS LADY LOVE, OKSANA...AND SINCE *THEY'RE* NOT BAD GUYS, THIS SPIDEY TINGLING MIGHT JUST MEAN I'M DUE IN WARDROBE LIKE TEN SECONDS AGO...

But today was not a day for terrorism.

BLLOOM

Though terror was a big part of it.

THUNT THUNT THUNT THUNT

NO... NO...

See where this is heading, readers? Big group of people? Pro-American event?

People of "foreign descent." Somewhere a DHS agent is twitching...

SYTSEVICH!

I WANT MY SKIN!

And like that... I'm covering a totally DIFFERENT American dream.

OKSANA?

ALEKSEI?!

GET DOWN, GIRL! DON'T LET HIM HEAR YOU--

COWARD! SHOW YOURSELF!

HOLY--

UPSIE-DAISY, MR. MAYOR! DON'T WANT THAT FLAT-TOP ANY FLATTER--!

THWAP

YOU! HOW DARE YOU--?!

AW, YOU KNOW ME, JJ, NONE OF MY SOAPS WERE ON TODAY SO I FIGURED, "WHY NOT LET A MANIAC LOOSE IN A CROWD FULL OF PEOPLE?"

I'M KOOKY LIKE THAT!

IT'S TIME! I'VE BEEN TOLD, SYTSEVICH!

TODAY THE ONE TRUE RHINO-- GAH!

SPLORCH

YEAH, YEAH. MAYBE YOU DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE LAST TIME WE DID THIS DANCE.

YOU CAN BE THE NEW RHINO ALL YOU WANT!

HERE, LET'S TRY IT!

THWOK!

OKAY, THAT WAS A GOOD START.

NOW YOU RUN AT ME REALLY FAST AND I'LL JUMP OUT OF THE WAY WHILE YOU KNOCK YOURSELF OUT ON A STEEL GIRDER.

KLONK

OR MAYBE I'LL JUST TEAR APART THAT STUPID ARMOR--WHOA NELLIE, THAT'S HARD!

This new Rhino has a serious mad on for the dude Sytsevich who USED to sport the armor. Wants to "TAKE the mantle" from him instead of just getting down to the robbing and smashing through banks.

I admire the thoroughness, but seriously...

SZZZ

ALEKSEI, RUN!
NO MORE. NO MORE.
ALEKSEI! NO!
YOU ARE READY TO FACE YOUR DESTINY, THEN?
YOU WANT ME? YOU WANT MY *SKIN?*
I WANT TO ASCEND--!
YOU WANT THE *HONOR* OF BEING THE *RHINO?*
YES!
THEN YOU MEET ME WHERE IT *BEGAN. TONIGHT. MIDNIGHT.* AND WE SETTLE IT LIKE *BEASTS.*
I KNOW YOUR STORY. I KNOW WHERE YOU WILL BE. I AM READY TO TAKE YOUR SKIN WITH *HONOR.*
BUT IF YOU DO NOT SHOW--
DON'T.
HOLD ON--
MIDNIGHT.
WHAM
HE'S DROPPIN'! 6 LINE IS ALREADY SHUT DOWN.
S.W.A.T. TEAM INTO THE TUNNEL!
DO NOT BOTHER. HE IS GONE--
YEAH, GONE TO TEAR UP HALF OF MANHATTAN WAITING TO KILL YOU TONIGHT! I'M NOT GONNA LET THIS HAPPEN--
SPIDER-MAN...
DIDN'T I MAKE YOU A *PROMISE?*

I WILL EVEN BE A COWARD FOR HER.

THE RHINO IS *DEAD*. I SAID THOSE THINGS ONLY TO MAKE HIM STOP. NOW...*YOU MAKE US DISAPPEAR.*

WOW. NOT HALF AS DUMB AS HE LOOKS...

NO OFFENSE.

Who ever thought... THE RHINO would restore my faith in HUMANITY.

JJJ wastes no time getting the Feds involved. Since Aleksei's done nothing to violate his parole, he's not in any trouble... Not legal trouble, anyway.

But he is the newest member in the WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM, and well on his way to the JERSEY SHORE.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

I HAVE AN *INSIDE MAN.* AND SAID MAN WILL ALSO BE GETTING ME *"EMBEDDED"* ON THE TRANSPORT DUTY.

CAN I COME?

NOT UNLESS YOU GET DISGUSTINGLY CUTE REALLY FAST. SORRY.

WHAT DO YOU THINK'S TAKING THEM SO LONG? IT'S ALWAYS A "CUT TO" IN THE MOVIES.

I DON'T KNOW...HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO CALL A *"REDO"* ON YOUR LIFE?

SKRCH! SKRCH!

MY GRANDMOTHER'S SAMOVAR?

IT IS CRACKED. I'LL BUY YOU A NEW ONE.

THE TABLE YOU MADE ME--?

Любимая

THERE IS NOTHING THERE THAT WE NEED. ONLY THIS. ONLY EACH OTHER.

...

"DEAREST OKSANA, I CANNOT BEGIN TO TELL YOU HOW PROUD I AM OF YOU ON THIS DAY... OR HOW IMPOSSIBLY LUCKY I AM THAT YOU HAVE CHOSEN ME TO BE A PART OF IT.

"TO BE A PART OF YOUR LIFE.

"YOU INSPIRE ME TO BE SO MUCH MORE THAN I ONCE WAS.

"YOU HAVE TURNED AN ANIMAL INTO A MAN, AND I LOVE YOU FOR IT, WITH ALL OF MY HEART.

"CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SPECIAL DAY. LOVE, ALEKSEI."

I HATE THAT SAMOVAR.

I BOUGHT THE TABLE ON BLEEKER STREET--

SHUT UP.

I was there for round one of this little show, and I have to tell you that I've never met anyone like Sytsevich.

That he chose peace over war amazes me considering the guy's record. In part I think Spider-Man got through to him on a machismo-do-the-right-thing level...

...but really it's HER. Oksana. True love. Yeah, I said it.

Webs tips off the Avengers, and they dispatch a crew to "The Beginning," a hotel on the West Side where the first Rhino mixed it up with Spider-Man. (Don't ask me... it's some man-code or testoster-epathy or something.)

I hear him suggest that they capture this newcomer "with extreme malice." He scares me a little, Spidey. I don't know why exactly...I think it's the eye thingies...or maybe his costume stink...whatev.

Notice how even in print, you can tell when someone's stalling? I'm stalling. I don't want to think about it. How quickly we went from making our great escape to--

SON OF A--

--watching it rain PEOPLE.

All of a sudden I don't want to play reporter any more.

RHINO SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THIS NEW GUY THAT FREAKED ME OUT.

"HE HAS NO HONOR. A MAN LIKE THIS...YOU CANNOT REASON WITH. HE WILL STOP AT NOTHING...". THAT'S WHAT HE TOLD ME.

DO NOT STOP DRIVING!

SAVE ME, SPIDER-MAN!

I'LL GET YOU! I'LL GET YOU!

I DON'T WANT TO DIE!

DO NOT STOP!

I GOT YOU--

STOP!!!

THE VAN!

PLEASE, GOD, NO--

LET ME BE FAST ENOUGH. LET ME BE--

THOOM THOOM THOOM

POLICE

NYPD

ALEKSEI!!

OKSANA..?
OKSANA..?

FIGHT ME, OLD MAN.

I have a cousin in the cops. Used to love it when she told stories about dead bodies over dinner. LOVED it.

ALEKSEI...LET ME SEE OKSANA. LET ME GET HER TO A HOSPITAL.

ALEKSEI..?

But the real thing... when it's someone you know...

...someone that someone LOVED...it isn't a story any more.

See? I warned you.

Любимая

THANK YOU FOR LOVING ME...AND FOR MAKING ME INTO A MAN...

...IF ONLY FOR A LITTLE WHILE.

ALEKSEI.

WEBS, DON'T--

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT...

...IS BECAUSE OF *YOU*.

PLEASE, DON'T--

WHAT IS HE GOING TO DO?

I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HE'S GOING TO DO.

I JUST CAN'T SAY THE WORDS.

KEATON BUTCHE SHOP

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP. OUR BUSINESS IS FINISHED.

ALEKSEI..? I HEARD...

MUST YOU--?

YOU SHOULD LEAVE NOW, VASILI...

LEAVE AND BE WITH THOSE WHOM YOU LOVE.

YOU COULDN'T LEAVE IT ALONE, YOU STUPID MONSTER?!

HE WAS *DONE!* HE MOVED ON!

WHY?!

TAXI

BECAUSE *ANIMALS* CARRY NOTHING WITH THEM, AND HE NEEDED TO BE REMINDED...

WHAT HE *TRULY* WAS.

YOU WILL SEE.

YOU WILL SEE, HE WILL THANK ME BEFORE HE DIES.

NNGH

I'm THERE.

Blood pumping and adrenaline in my mouth and every instinct telling me to run, but I'm there.

THOOM THOOM

THOOM

I'm there to work. To tell YOU what I see. Tell you that the earth MOVED and I'll never look at an animal the same way ever again, because of HIM.

The second I lay eyes on him, I know. Aleksei Sytsevich DIED on the Tri-Borough alongside his wife.

Because the thing running at us isn't HUMAN any longer. Not in any way that counts. He can't be...

He has no heart.

THE ASCENSION! AS DESTINED!

ALEKSEI...

DO SOMETHING, SPIDER-MAN.

PLEASE.

A sound comes out of Spider-Man that's so soft it screams.

It's the sound of his heart breaking. The last thing I'd hear for the next ten minutes.

I sucked in physics. I'm laying that out there so you can understand why I CAN'T understand how two men hitting one another did what it did.

We are THROWN HUNDREDS of feet into the air and showered in glass and asphalt and cars.

I start bleeding from one ear and my nose, vessels in my head RUPTURING by the sheer proximity to the epicenter of the impact.

"Epicenter." See, I did pay attention a little bit...but where I failed science, I do know a few things about the way the world works.

I understand the power of LOVE, corny as it sounds. The power it has to heal, and the absolute power to DESTROY.

I--
AAAARH! THIS--ISN'T POSSIBLE!
SYSTEMIC DAMAGE... REPAIRING...
OH, GOD! GOD HELP ME!
HOLY MOTHER OF--
ALEKSEI... PLEASE...STOP IT HERE. HE'LL GO TO JAIL. HE WON'T COME OUT.
I KNOW... I KNOW WHAT YOU LOST...
YOU CAN STILL HAVE A SECOND CHANCE. PLEASE.
...
ALL OF THIS HAPPENED BECAUSE I TRIED TO BE SOMETHING I AM NOT.
I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU.
ALEKSI!
NO!

STRUCTURAL REPAIRS INITIATED.

LEG UNITS TO REGAIN FUNCTION IN TEN SECONDS...

HURRY... ANGEL! HELP ME, PLEASE...

Was he a man who dressed like an animal? Was he an animal pretending to be a man?

SEVEN SECONDS.

I don't have a clue. But I know one thing... He LOVED someone, and it was beautiful.

ALEKSEI!!!

NOOOOOO!

SIX SECONDS

And sometimes, I think when something beautiful in this world is taken away with such violence...

FIVE--

The universe reacts in kind.

AAAAAAAAAAAGH!!

GOODBYE, OKSANA.

The New Rhino is dead.

Aleksei Sytsevich is dead.

Long live the Old Rhino.

ARE YOU--?

YEAH...

YOU?

NO. I'M... I'M NOT COOL.

NOT AT ALL...

HE NEVER STOOD A CHANCE, DID HE?

WHICH ONE?

EITHER. BOTH.

ANY OF US.

UNEMPLOY
BENEFITS
LINE UP
HERE

UNEMPLOYMENT

YOU MADE IT! ANOTHER MINUTE AND YOU'D BE *HATING* ME.

KILLER OUT THERE, HUH?

HEY, YOU'RE THAT LYIN' GUY FROM THE PAPER, RIGHT?

YEAH...

SO, HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

THIS YOUR FIRST TIME APPLYING FOR BENEFITS?

...

SIR? YOU WAITED A WHILE... I CAN GET YOU SIGNED UP PRETTY QUICKLY.

DON'T YOU NEED SOME EXTRA HELP RIGHT NOW?

NO.

I DON'T THINK SO.

SORRY.

The End.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #626

The Parker/Gonzales Estate.

...MAYBE I *SHOULD* RECONSIDER TONIGHT'S THING... UM...IS THAT THE DOOR?

...

OH, DON'T MIND HIM, LUCAS.

HEY, MICHELE.

THAT'S JUST MY AMBITION-CHALLENGED ROOMMATE.

I HAVE AN HOUR TO KILL WHILE MY LAUNDRY IS DRYING DOWNSTAIRS.

MIND IF I WATCH *TV*, OR ARE YOU GUYS...

I ALREADY TOLD YOU, MR. UNEMPLOYED, UNTIL YOU PAY YOUR HALF OF THE *CABLE* I'M NOT UNLOCKING *PARENTAL CONTROL*, SO GOOD *LUCK* WITH THAT.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, I GOTTA JET. I'LL THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID, THOUGH, I PROMISE.

YOU'RE TOO *GOOD* FOR ME, SHELLER, YOU KNOW THAT?

DON'T I *KNOW* IT.

YOU LIKE 'EM *BIG*, HUH?

I LIKE "*EM*" WITH FUNCTIONING BRAIN CELLS.

WHICH COUNTS *YOU* OUT, PARKER.

ET A JOB!

Don't at my food!

MICHELE'S NEW *BOYFRIEND*...

...MADE MY SPIDER-SENSE GO ABSOLUTELY *HAYWIRE*...

...WHY?

Queensboro Plaza.
THAT NIGHT.

MICHELE AND I HAVE NEVER BEEN *BESTEST PALS*, BUT WE'VE BEEN HOLDING AT *DEFCON 4*...

...EVER SINCE *THE CHAMELEON*, WEARING *MY* FACE TRICKED HER INTO THINKING I LIKED HER AND THEN *ABANDONED* HER.

SHE BLAMES ME FOR THAT-- AND WHY SHOULDN'T SHE? IT ONLY HAPPENED BECAUSE OF HER ASSOCIATION WITH ME.

IN ASM: RED-HEADED STRANGER--*STEVE*

I TRIED TO TELL HER THE *TRUTH*...BUT MAYBE FOR *HER* SAKE I SHOULD BE HAPPY SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME.

HER BLOOD PRESSURE IS HIGH ENOUGH AS IT IS.

STILL, I'M *NOT* GONNA LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO HER AGAIN.

SO, LUCAS, THAT MEANS I'M ON YOU LIKE *WHITE ON RICE* UNTIL YOU SHOW ME WHY YOU SET OFF A *FIVE-ALARM FIRE* INSIDE MY BRAIN...

WELL, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?

MYSTERIOUS RECESSION-HALTED CONSTRUCTION SITE?

CHECK.

WELL-ARMED GOONS?™

CHECK.

JUST A COUPLE MOOKS HERE AND THERE.

THIS HAS THE MAKINGS OF AN *EARLY...*

...NIGHT.

YEESH.

SPOKE TOO SOON.

THE PROVERBIAL "*HIVE OF SCUM & VILLAINY*" HERE.

AND THERE'S MICHELE'S *BOY TOY.*

SO I'M JUST GOING TO GO AHEAD AND LEAP TO THE CONCLUSION HE'S UP TO NO--

AWRIGHT, PEOPLE!

BAM BAM BAM

UH-OH. BAD HAIRCUT. GUN FOR AN ARM.

EYES FRONT!

THAT'S BUSHWACKER.

YOU KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE! BECAUSE HE ASKED YOU TO BE HERE!

AND NEXT TO HIM... TOMBSTONE?

SO GIVE IT UP!

I SAID GIVE IT UP FOR THE MAN!

AND THE CROWD GOES WILD.

I'VE STUMBLED ONTO SOMETHING BIG.

THOSE TWO WORK FOR NEW YORK'S SELF-PROCLAIMED GODFATHER OF SUPER-CRIME...

SHOW SOME LOVE TO YOUR KINGPIN...

...THE HOOD!

YAY! YAY! YAY! RRRRRAAAAAHHHHHHHH!! OH YEAH!

BOYS... TRADITIONALLY MY ORGANIZATION'S BEEN COMPRISED OF *ESTABLISHED* PROFESSIONALS.

BUT I PRIDE MYSELF ON BEING A *FORWARD THINKER.*

ALWAYS SOMETHING TO BE SAID FOR *NEW BLOOD.*

ALL OF YOU ARE WELL-KNOWN LEG-BREAKERS...

...AND/OR CHAMPIONS OF YOUR RESPECTIVE PRISON *BOXING LEAGUES.*

I WANT YOU ALL TO GET IN THAT *RING* TONIGHT AND *SHOW ME SOMETHING.*

LAST MAN STANDING GETS THE *OPEN SLOT* ON MY TEAM.

AND PUTS ON MY MOST RECENT *ACQUISITION--*

--THE ORIGINAL BATTLESUIT OF ONE *MAC GARGAN--*

--AND BECOMES **THE NEW SCORPION!**

OOOOKAY... BACK UP *SLOWLY...*

START ASSEMBLING SOME *AVENGERS...*

AHEM.

RRRRRAAAAAHHHHHHHH!!

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN IN

THE STING

FRED VAN LENTE
writer

MICHAEL GAYDOS
art

VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
letters

TOM BRENNAN
asst. editor

STEPHEN WACKER
prince of ruins

TOM BREVOORT
exec. editor

JOE QUESADA
editor in chief

DAN BUCKLEY
publisher

ALAN FINE
exec. producer

WHO ARE YOU?

WHO AM... ARE YOU SERIOUS?

I'VE GOT A *SPIDER* ON MY CHEST. FIGURE IT OUT!

WHO ARE *YOU?*

S.H.I.E.L.D. CODE-NAMED ME "*SCORPION.*"

THE NO LONGER ACTIVE STRATEGIC HAZARD INTERVENTION, ESPIONAGE LOGISTICS DIRECTORATE.

WAIT--YOU'RE ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS, THEN?

WELL, HOLD ON--ME TOO. LET'S--

--HEY! WHAT THE WHAT?!

THERE'S "*GOOD GUYS*" AND "*BAD GUYS*" IN YOUR WORLD? CUTE.

YOU HAVE WHAT THE POETS CALL *MOXIE*. I *RESPECT* THAT.

BUT IF YOU'RE JUST HERE TO DEFEND YOUR *TRADEMARK*, THERE'S A LOT MORE AT *STAKE* THAN--

THWIP

THWIP

MUST BE A NICE PLACE TO *LIVE*...

...IF IT *EXISTED*.

WHOA!

WHAT I'M DOING HERE IS MY BUSINESS.

SNAAP

"WHEN YOUR 'GOOD GUYS' AT S.H.I.E.L.D. TRIED TO TURN ME INTO A *KILLER*, I BECAME AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR."

"DURING MY LAST JOB IN MADRIPOOR, I ABSORBED *S.P.I.N.* TECH."

DURING WORLD WAR HULK

AVENGERS: THE INITIATIVE #24 -LOVE, FRED'S COMIC COLLECTION

AND MY BODY'S LYMPHATIC SYSTEM HAS BEEN GENETICALLY ENGINEERED TO MANUFACTURE ABSORBED SUBSTANCES AND RELEASE THEM...

...THROUGH MY *STING*.

WHRRRR-

KLIK

SO FOR THE NEXT HALF-HOUR OR SO...

OW!! WATCH IT!

SHNNK

...I'D STRONGLY SUGGEST STAYING OUT OF MY WAY.

S.P.I.N., S.P.I.N... WHY DOES THAT SOUND SO FAMILIAR?

THESE *GOVERNMENT* TYPES AND THEIR *ACRONYMS*...

UH-OH... SOMETHIN' AIN'T RIGHT...

SQUEEE

THESE *OPEN* AUDITIONS?

OR SHOULD I GO THROUGH MY *AGENT?*

BUSHWACKER.

YEAH, BOSS?

GUESS WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SHOUT.

"KILL HIM?"

YOU SEE. THIS IS WHY I KEEP YOU AROUND.

THIS WOULD BE *BAD.*

LADY SCORPIA'S STING HAS ROBBED ME OF MY *POWERS*, BUT I STILL HAVE MY *WEB-SHOOTERS--*

SPENT SIX MONTHS IN THE SLAMMER BECAUSE OF THIS GUY!

--BUT WITHOUT MY SPEED AND AGILITY TO *AIM* PROPERLY, I CAN'T HIT THE BROAD SIDE OF A BARN.

BEEN WAITIN' TO PAY HIM BACK EVER SINCE.

WHUDDD

AND THEN THERE'S THAT WHOLE LACK-OF-*SPIDER-SENSE...*

YO.

BEDSHEET.

SSHRRAAKKK

INTEL SAYS YOUR POWER RESIDES IN YOUR *CLOAK OF MANY THINGS*, OR WHATEVER, SO S.P.I.N. WON'T WORK ON *YOU*...

...I GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO RIP YOU OFF THE *OLD-FASHIONED* WAY...

OH NO, CHICKEE...I PAID *GOOD MONEY* TO NORMAN *OSBORN* FOR THAT GET-UP...

NEW ORDERS! FORGET THE SPIDER-POSEUR!!

KILL HER!

C'MON-- THE *WUSS* IS A *DIVERSION!*

I *KNEW* IT! I GOT MY BUTT *HANDED* TO ME BY THE *REAL* BUG WHEN I WAS WITH THE *MAGGIA--THAT* GUY KNEW HOW TO THROW A *PUNCH!*

WELL, AT LEAST MY FEARSOME REPUTATION IN THE UNDERWORLD REMAINS INTACT, HE INTERNALLY MONOLOGUED SARCASTICALLY.

AS LONG AS I'M WEARING A ***SPIDER-MAN*** COSTUME, I'M A BRIGHT RED-AND-BLUE ***SITTING DUCK*** FOR THESE BRUISERS.

LEMME GRAB ONE THESE MOOKS' ABANDONED GYM BAGS...

...BECAUSE ***THIS*** LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR...

...***ANONYMOUS WHITE GUY!***™

IT'S DARK ENOUGH, AND THERE'S ENOUGH CONFUSION...

...THAT I SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND SCORPION LIKE THIS WITHOUT GETTING...

...***SPOTTED.***

WHOOOF!!

PARKER?
GONZALEZ?
WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* HERE?!
WELL, TRUTH BE TOLD... I *REALLY* DIDN'T LIKE THE LOOK OF YOUR BOYFRIEND TODAY.
I FOLLOWED HIM TO MAKE SURE YOU WOULDN'T GET INTO ANY... UH...
...TROUBLE.
GEE, THANKS, MOM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU.
IT'S THE THOUGHT THAT COUNTS.
NOT THAT IT'S ANYTHING THAT EVEN FAINTLY *RESEMBLES* YOUR BUSINESS, BUT LUCAS *ISN'T* MY BOYFRIEND.
HE'S A *CLIENT*.
SERIOUSLY? HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE HE COULD AFFORD YOUR *FEE*--
WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT ME COULD FILL *VOLUMES*.
LIKE A LOT OF LAWYERS, I GOT MY START IN *LEGAL AID*--
COOL IT!
HOOD SAYS *NOBODY* LEAVES 'TIL GREEN GIRL GETS *DEAD*--
CAREFUL, 'CHELE. I'LL HANDLE--

KWAKKK

OR YOU COULD JUST DO THAT.

TAE BO KICKBOXING. WHERE DO YOU THINK I GOT THESE *ABS?*

I ASSUMED FROM *SATAN,* ALONG WITH YOUR *PERSONALITY.*

HEY! IF I'M *CURT,* IF I'M *AGGRESSIVE...*

...IT'S BECAUSE THE PEOPLE WHO *DEPEND* ON ME DON'T DESERVE ANYTHING *LESS!*

"LUCAS WAS ACCUSED OF A STRING OF PIZZA DELIVERY ROBBERIES WHEN HE WAS JUST A *KID,* AND I THREW EVERYTHING I *HAD* INTO HIS DEFENSE.

"HE WAS *CLEARLY* INNOCENT--THEY HAD *NO* PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ON HIM--BUT THE JUDGE GAVE HIM THE MAX.

"I NEVER STOPPED FIGHTING FOR *APPEALS,* FOR A *RETRIAL*--

"NOW THAT HE'S BEEN RELEASED, HE'S GOT A CHANCE TO PROVE TO THE WORLD WHAT KIND OF GUY HE REALLY IS."

HE'S GOT TO KNOW PEOPLE *BELIEVE* IN HIM--HE DOESN'T *NEED* THE CROWD HE MET INSIDE.

"I CAN'T *STAND BY* AND LET HIM THROW AWAY HIS *SECOND CHANCE...*"

FRICKIN' MAZE...

BAM BAM BAM

YOU GONNA STEAL FROM *ME?*

FROM ME?

BAM BAM

YA MADE THE HOOD PRETTY ANGRY, GIRLY.

YOU SHOULDA JUST WOKE UP THIS MORNING...

...AND SLIT YOUR *WRISTS.*

SAVED US *ALL* A LOT OF TROUBLE.

YAAHHH!

KRRRNNNCH

NGGKKK

YOU AND WHAT ARMY, CHALKY?

SHRRAKAKKK

I'M THINKING...

...THIS ONE.

LUCAS!

MICHELE...?

HAVE YOU LOST YOUR FREAKING *MIND?* GET *OUT* OF HERE!

NOT WITHOUT *YOU*, LUCAS! YOU'RE *BETTER* THAN THIS--

WHOA! YOU *WAY* OUTTA LINE INVITING YOUR OLD LADY TO THIS THING, MAN!

NAW, IT AIN'T *LIKE* THAT-- SHE *WAS* MY USELESS *LAWYER!*

DIDN'T GET ME OFF, DIDN'T WIN *APPEAL*, DIDN'T GET A *NEW TRIAL!*

BUT SHE LENDS ME *MONEY*, SO I PUT UP WITH HER *OPRAH* ACT!

WHAT...?

I *DID* THE ROBBERIES, DUMMY! BUT *YOU* WAS TOO *STUBBORN* TO SEE WHAT WAS OBVIOUS TO EVERYBODY!

THIS IS *ME--THIS* IS MY WORLD-- AND ALWAYS *WILL* BE!

AND YOU SHOULDN'T'A *COME* HERE--

--JUST SO YOU COULD FEEL *BETTER* ABOUT YOURSELF!

GKKKK-- NO--

EXCUSE ME, LUCAS...

THAT'S MY ROOMMATE YOU'RE CHOKING!

SON OF A-- KWAANNNG

SHELLER, HOW COULD YA...

EXIT, PURSUED BY BEAR.

GO DOWN THIS WAY?

NO-- THAT'S GOON CENTRAL-- C'MON, TO THE *LEFT!*

HOW CAN YOU BE SO *SURE,* PARKER?

YEAH, HOW *CAN* I, UNLESS...

SPIDER-SENSE! YOU'RE *BACK!*

THE SCORPION'S STING WORE OFF!

I SAW A BAR HALFWAY DOWN THE BLOCK TOWARD THE #7 TRAIN!

DUCK IN THERE, CALL THE COPS, AND WAIT FOR ME!

WAI-- *WHAT?*

YOU CAN'T GO BACK FOR *PICTURES!*

UH... *PICTURES.* YEAH. *RIGHT.*

WHATEVER IT TAKES TO SAFELY GET YOU OUT OF HERE!

DISPENSE WITH THE LAST WORDS.

JUST BLOW HER HEAD OFF.

AND DUMP WHAT'S LEFT ON THE *AVENGERS'* DOORSTEP.

THWAAPP

YOO-HOO! *HOODIE!*

I'M FROM THE *SAFETY BOARD!*

IT *WAS* THE BUG...

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO CITE YOU FOR HOLDING A MASSIVE ILLEGAL *UNDERWORLD GATHERING* IN AN UNFINISHED BUILDING.

KRRRREEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE

IT'S THE *SUPPORT BEAMS,* YOU SEE.

NOT SO *STABLE.*

EVERYBODY CLEAR OUT-- N--

BUMMMMMM

YOU... CAME BACK FOR ME...

EVEN AFTER I...

YUP.

WELCOME TO MY WORLD, SCORPY.

NICE.

I OWE YOU ONE, SPIDER-MAN.

YOU DO AT THAT.

I KNOW I'M GOING TO KICK MYSELF LATER FOR NOT TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE MOMENT AND ASKING HER FOR SOME QUARTERS FOR THE DRYER..

...BUT I HAVE A HOSTILE ROOMMATE TO MEET UP WITH.

HOW YOU HOLDING UP?

THE REVELATION I'M A *COMPLETE IDIOT* IS SLOWLY SINKING IN.

DON'T BEAT YOURSELF UP.

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE THE FIRST OR LAST LAWYER TO BE SUCKERED BY A CON.

I WAS SO *SURE*, THOUGH... I DIDN'T EVEN *QUESTION* IT.

MAYBE... IT'S A NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF NOT KNOWING WHEN TO TAKE MY *GAME FACE* OFF.

I MAY HAVE BEEN WRONG ABOUT YOU *TOO*, PETER.

YOU RISKED A LOT, JUST TO HELP ME. I HAD NO IDEA YOU'D DO THAT.

WHAT CAN I SAY? WITHOUT A JOB I HAVE MORE TIME TO SAVE YOU FROM SUPER VILLAIN GANGS.

TRUCE, IN THE GONZALES/PARKER HOUSEHOLD?

TRUCE.

AND... WHAT HAPPENED... BETWEEN *US* THAT NIGHT.

I'M... TRULY *SORRY*.

I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU. OR *ANYBODY*.

WELL.

WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?

HONESTLY, MICHELE?

I HAVE ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA.

WELL, IT'S A GOOD FIRST STEP...

"...BUT YOU STILL CAN'T WATCH MY CABLE."

BIG R

LOUNGE

"YES, SIR."

"WATCH IT, PARKER."

"YES, SIR."

Midtown Manhattan. Near Dawn.

HOW'D IT GO, SCORPION?

PIECE OF CAKE.

COULD HAVE DONE IT WITH ONE HAND AND NEW TAIL TIED BEHIND MY BACK.

THE GARB OF A SACRED TOTEM CLAIMED BY ONE CLAD IN THE RAIMENT OF THAT SAME TOTEM.

THE ANIMIST SPIRITS WILL BE MOST PLEASED, AND REFLECT FAVORABLY ON OUR FAST-APPROACHING VENTURE.

UH... YEAH.

I *TOTALLY* WANT TO SUBSCRIBE TO YOUR NEWSLETTER.

HUNDRED G'S CHECKS OUT.

AND SO AM **I.**

PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU...

...RUSSIAN NUTJOBS...

Next: Something Can Stop The Juggernaut

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN ANNUAL #37

THE SPIDER and THE SHIELD!

REVEALED AT LAST-- SPIDER-MAN'S FIRST MEETING WITH Captain America

STOP! THIS AIN'T CAPTAIN AMERICA! ARE YOU BLIND? THIS IS THE SINISTER SANDMAN!

ANOTHER MARVEL COLLECTOR'S ITEM CLASSIC AS TOLD BY:

KARL KESEL writer
PAULO SIQUEIRA artist
FABIO D'AURIA colorist
VC's JOE CARAMAGNA letterer
THOMAS BRENNAN asst. editor
STEPHEN WACKER class ick
TOM BREVOORT exec. editor
JOE QUESADA editor-in-chief
DAN BUCKLEY publisher
ALAN FINE exec. producer

IT ALL STARTS IN THAT MYSTERIOUS TIME KNOWN AS A FEW YEARS AGO!

SO I'M ON MY WAY TO THE DAILY BUGLE TO CAJOLE THE JOVIAL J. JONAH JAMESON INTO GIVING ME A PHOTO ASSIGNMENT...

...MEANING ME AS PETER PARKER...

...AND I SWING BY THE NEAREST ATM TO TAKE OUT A FEW DOLLARS FROM MY INCREDIBLE SHRINKING BANK ACCOUNT...

...ONLY TO FIND THE EVER-SHIFTY SANDMAN HAS BEATEN ME TO THE PUNCH.

SO TO SPEAK.

KWOK!

HELP--POLICE! THE MANHATTAN MUTUAL AT 40TH AND SECOND IS BEING ROBBED BY SANDMAN AND SPIDER-MAN!

COME ON-- OOF!

PLEASE! DOES IT LOOK LIKE WE'RE WORKING TOGETHER?

YOU MEAN YOU'RE BOTH ROBBING THE SAME BANK AT THE SAME TIME?

IT'S A SUPER-VILLAIN WAR!

GOTTA LOVE THE MAN ON THE STREET...

...I KEEP TELLING MYSELF OVER AND OVER AND *OVER*...

LOOKS LIKE YOU PICKED A BAD DAY TO ROB A *BANK*, MARKO.

WELL, YOU PICKED A BAD DAY TO *BREATHE!*

OHHH... "GOOD" ONE.

"*FLINT*" MARKO ISN'T EXACTLY A *DEEP THINKER*, BUT AS HIS SANDY TENDRILS BECOME *GRANITE-HARD* AROUND MY FACE...

...I GOT TO ADMIT--WHEN HE'S *RIGHT*, HE'S *RIGHT!*

DOESN'T HELP THAT HE'S FINALLY SOLID ENOUGH TO *HIT*.

NO *LEVERAGE*...

...NO *AIR*...

WHANG!

...NO WAY.

IT'S ALL RIGHT, PEOPLE. EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL.

NO WAY NO WAY! IT...IT'S...

CAPTAIN AMERICA!

WHAT HE SAID! THE LIVING LEGEND OF WORLD WAR TWO! THE STAR-SPANGLED SYMBOL OF LIBERTY AND FREEDOM AND BASEBALL AND APPLE PIE!

UNCLE BEN TALKED ABOUT HIM ALL THE TIME...

HAVE THE AUTHORITIES BEEN CONTACTED?

THE COPS ARE ON THEIR WAY, CAP!

GOOD JOB.

IT WAS ON TV HOW THE AVENGERS RECENTLY FOUND HIM--HOW HE'S BEEN IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION SINCE WORLD WAR 2--BUT TO SEE HIM IN PERSON--!

HE WALKS IN, HE OWNS THE ROOM.

NOW IF YOU COULD ALL PLEASE CLEAR THE AREA SO I CAN SECURE THE PERIMETER...

WHAT ABOUT THE WEB-SLINGER, CAP?

OH, HE WON'T BE A PROBLEM.

COMPLETELY CONFIDENT AND IN COMMAND.

IT COMES SO EASILY, SO *NATURALLY* TO HIM...

SO, WHAT *HAPPENED* HERE, SPIDER-MAN?

...UNLIKE *CERTAIN* SUPER-TYPES.

WELL, THERE WAS, Y'KNOW... MY *SPIDER-SENSE* AND...AND THE *BANK*...AND... *YELLING*...

I SEE.

WELL, I'M SURE YOU COULD HAVE HANDLED THE SITUATION ON YOUR *OWN*, BUT I'M GLAD OUR PATHS *CROSSED*.

YOU *ARE*?

I'VE BEEN *LOOKING* FOR YOU.

YOU *HAVE*?

AND THEN SANDMAN HIT ME.

WHY, OH *WHY* COULDN'T MARKO HAVE *KILLED* ME WHEN HE HAD THE CHANCE?

A QUICK SEARCH ON THE COMPUTER-- *FASCINATING* DEVICE, THE *WORLD* AT YOUR FINGERTIPS-- REVEALED YOU'RE OFTEN SEEN NEAR THE *DAILY BUGLE* BUILDING.

IT DID, HUH?

I MEAN-- *FREAKISH COINCIDENCE!* THERE'S JUST A...REALLY GOOD *BAGEL* PLACE NEAR HERE.

WELL, I WANTED TO *THANK YOU* FOR HELPING THE *AVENGERS*--AND SAVING *MY LIFE*--A FEW DAYS AGO.

DOWN IN *MEXICO*, I SAW YOU TAKE OUT THAT SPIDER-MAN *ROBOT*.*

*AS SHOWN IN THE NOW CLASSIC AVENGERS VOL. 1 #11 "WAY-BACK" WACKER.

OH, YEAH! SORRY I DIDN'T STICK AROUND *AFTER* BUT I HAD THIS CRAZY IDEA YOU GUYS'D THINK *I* WAS THE *ROBOT* AND, UM...

I MEAN, I'M SURE YOU *SAW* ME, BUT THERE'S STILL THE WHOLE *HEAT OF BATTLE* THING, AND THE AVENGERS WANTING TO, Y'KNOW, *AVENGE* SOMETHING...

SO THIS EENSY-WEENSY SPIDER *VAMOOSED*.

ROGER THAT.

HOW'D YOU GET DOWN AND BACK SO *QUICKLY*, BY THE WAY?

WOULD YOU BELIEVE I BORROWED A *SKY-CYCLE* FROM THE *FANTASTIC FOUR?*

WAIT--DID YOU RICOCHET OFF THE *EMPIRE STATE BUILDING* AND ALMOST HIT *MACY'S?*

TOOK A WHILE TO GET THE *HANG* OF IT, YEAH.

WELL, I'M GLAD YOU *DID.*

THANKS *AGAIN*, SPIDER-MAN. IF THERE'S ANYTHING I CAN EVER DO FOR *YOU...*

BELIEVE ME--YOU ALREADY *DID*, CAP.

HE'S SHAKING *MY* HAND! IT'S MY HAND--AND HE'S *SHAKING* IT!

IT JUST DOESN'T GET ANY *BETTER* THAN THIS!

AND TO *PROVE* MY POINT...

WOOP-WUP! WOOP-WUP!

THE *POLICE*. I BELIEVE YOU HAVE SOME... *MISUNDERSTANDINGS* WITH THEM?

NOT REALLY. THEY *SEE* ME, THEY *SHOOT* AT ME. NO MISUNDERSTANDING *THAT.*

WELL, IT'S SOMETHING TO *AVOID*. I'LL DEAL WITH THE *AUTHORITIES*, MAKE SURE SANDMAN GETS INTO *CUSTODY*. YOU DISAPPEAR WHEN I'M *NOT* LOOKING.

WHICH WOULD BE *NOW.*

THIS IS WHY *HE* IS A LEADER OF MEN, AND I AM *NOT.*

I MAKE MYSELF SCARCE BEFORE YOU CAN SAY "THE COPS SHOW UP AND SLAP A POWER-NEUTRALIZING INHIBITOR-COLLAR ON MARKO."

MARKO CLIMBS INTO THE WAGON LIKE HE'S BEING FORCED TO EAT VEGETARIAN WHEN HE'S SALIVATING FOR STEAK.

NEW YORK'S FINEST DON'T FLINCH. THEY'RE TOTAL PROS AS THEY LOCK HIM AWAY, WISHING SANDMAN PLEASANT DREAMS...

...BEFORE GOING ALL FAN-BOY ON CAP--TAKING PICTURES, GETTING AUTOGRAPHS.

WITH ME IT WOULD HAVE BEEN MUG-SHOTS AND CONFESSION STATEMENTS.

MAYBE I JUST NEED TO CHANGE MY NAME AND COSTUME. THE STAR-SPANGLED SPIDER...SPIDER-PATRIOT...CAPTAIN AMERICA AND SPIDEY...

MAYBE I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER...

FHZZZT AAAK!

PHASE-IN-- COMPLETE!

EXCELLENT, TESLA. TARGET IS IN THE VEHICLE.

CURIE, KAFKA-- EXPEDITE.

WITH PLEASURE, DARWIN.

NOT SO FAST, PEOPLE. WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?

AH--CAPTAIN AMERICA. HOW FORTUITOUS TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

WE REPRESENT A SECRET ENCLAVE OF THE WORLD'S CUTTING-EDGE THINKERS AND THEORISTS-- A GROUP OF ROGUE SCHOLARS, IF YOU WILL.

OUR BEST AND BRIGHTEST HAVE DETERMINED WITH MATHEMATICAL CERTAINTY THAT CHRONAL STRANDS ARE CONVERGING IN THE NEXT FEW HOURS SO THAT...

...FLINT MARKO AND HIS UNIQUE SILICIC ABILITIES WILL BE EVENTUALLY BUT DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXTERMINATION OF AT LEAST 27% OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION.

GOOD NEWS: IT'S COMPLETELY AVOIDABLE.

HRM. EASY. KILL MARKO.

WON'T HAPPEN.

BUT, CAPTAIN, THE LAST TIME THIS SORT OF CHRONAL ALIGNMENT OCCURRED, IT LED TO THE RISE OF *HITLER.*

AND NONE BETTER THAN *YOU* SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE MORAL IMPERATIVE TO ASSASSINATE A HITLER-- *BEFORE* HE COMMITS HIS ATROCITIES.

I *WISH* IT WAS THAT EASY--BUT YOU CAN'T CONDEMN A MAN FOR WHAT *MIGHT* HAPPEN.

SOME OF THE GREATEST *MINDS* I EVER KNEW SAID WE'D BE LIVING ON THE *MOON* BY THE 21ST CENTURY. THE FUTURE ISN'T WRITTEN IN *STONE.*

NO--IN THIS CASE IT'S WRITTEN IN RADIOACTIVE *SAND.* AND WE *IGNORE* THAT FACT AT OUR *PERIL!*

SANDMAN IS NO *HITLER*-- HE'S A *THUG.*

SEMANTICS.

I TRULY HOPED YOU WOULD SEE THINGS *OUR* WAY, CAPTAIN...

...BUT FULLY EXPECTED YOU *WOULDN'T!*

MMMRRAHHR!

NO LEFT TUR

POLICE

POLICE

QUICKLY, KAFKA!

YEAH, YEAH, CURIE-- I KNOW...

...DON'T BUG ME!

SPLINCH

REENCH!

THWIPP!

GHAA--!

'SCUSE ME! PARDON ME! COMIN' THROUGH!

Shop

OFF! GET IT OFF!

THANKS FOR TEARING THIS TANK *OPEN*, BY THE WAY. MAKES *MY* JOB A LOT *EASIER*.

AND NOW THE *HARD* PART...

COME WITH *ME* IF YOU WANT TO *LIVE!*

THAT'S THE *WORST* SCHWARZENEGGER IMPRESSION EVER!

WASN'T DOING AH-NULD-- WAS TRYING NOT TO *GAG!*

AND F.Y.I.-- WHEN SOMEONE'S SAVING YOU? *NOT* THE BEST TIME TO *INSULT* THEM.

THAT WASN'T *NICE!* WASN'T NICE *AT ALL!*

WE'RE NOT THE VILLAINS!

WE'RE NOT THE ONES DESTINED TO KILL *ONE-THIRD* OF HUMANITY!

YEAH, RUMOR IS THAT'S *MARKO* HERE.

ANOTHER RUMOR IS THAT A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER CAN GIVE YOU POWERS... WELL, THAT ONE'S *TRUE,* BUT--

SKRAKK!

TESLA--DO SOMETHING! WE'RE NOT IN THE *LAB!*

HRM? OH. YES. OF *COURSE.*

TO BE CONTINUED!

SPIDER-MAN--TAKE THE *HIGH* ROAD! TOO MANY *CIVILIANS* DOWN HERE!

STOP

WAY *AHEAD* OF YOU.

RIGHT *BEHIND* YOU.

WAP!

WAK!

WOK!

WUNK!

-HNG!-

CURIE-- ARE YOU--?

FINE. I'M... I'M *FINE*, DARWIN. BUT *MARKO--!*

DON'T WORRY...

...JUST GIVE ME...

...A MOMENT TO...

...THINK.

AH! YES. HOW *PERFECT.*

MADAM? I BELIEVE ONLY *YOUR* INIMITABLE ABILITIES CAN HELP US AT PRESENT.

CAREFUL, DARWIN, OR YOU'LL TURN MY *HEAD*...

...AND I'M TRYING TO HIT A VERY SMALL *TARGET!*

FZZM!!

INCOMING!

THAT'S WHAT YOU *SAY*, RIGHT?

HA! SHE SHOOTS LIKE A *GIRL!*

IF YOU MEAN SHE HITS EXACTLY WHAT SHE AIMS FOR...

...YOU'RE *RIGHT!*

FRAK A RAT! WHERE'D *THIS* FREAKSHOW COME FROM?

CURIE'S BLAST HIT THE ROOFTOP *GARDEN.*

CURIE...RADIATION... *MUTATION*--SHOULD HAVE *KNOWN!*

CAP'S RIGHT--THIS IS *NO MISTAKE!*

HEY-- I THINK IT *LIKES* YOU, MARKO!

PROBABLY PREFERS *SANDY* SOIL.

GET THE DAMN *CUFFS* AND *COLLAR* OFF AND THAT'LL CHANGE *FAST!*

YEAH *NFF!* THAT'S GONNA HAPPEN BECAUSE I HAVE THE PROPORTIONAL *BRAINS* OF A SPIDER!

DON'T WORRY-- I BELIEVE THE BEST WAY TO *STEM* THIS PROBLEM IS TO GET TO THE *ROOT* OF IT!

SHINK!

WAS THAT A *JOKE?* DID HE JUST MAKE A *JOKE?!*

NO! NO, *HE'S* SUPPOSED TO RUB OFF ON *ME,* NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND!

WE BETTER END THIS *SOON*-- FOR THE SAKE OF *ALL AMERICA!*

THIS ISN'T GOING TO *WORK.*

YEAH, I WAS JUST THINKING THE SAME THING. *KINDA.*

THEY WON'T STOP UNTIL SANDMAN'S *DEAD,* NO MATTER WHO OR WHAT GETS IN THEIR WAY. WE KEEP RUNNING, THINGS WILL ONLY GET *WORSE.*

THEN LET'S CUT TO THE *CHASE.* LET'S *MAKE* THINGS WORSE.

A LOT WORSE!

AND IN THE TIME IT TAKES TO HUM THE *JEOPARDY* THEME...

THEY'RE *GONE*, DARWIN. I *FAILED*...

AU CONTRAIRE, MADAME-- YOU PERFORMED YOUR PART *FLAWLESSLY*.

WE HAVE *REGROUPED*, WHILE OUR TARGET COULD NOT HAVE GOTTEN *FAR*.

DAMN--FIGURED THAT *OUT*, HUH? *NOW* I'M WORRIED!

ANY MINUTE ONE OF YOU *ROGUE SCHOLARS* COULD TRY TO KILL US WITH A DEADLY DULL *ACADEMIC LECTURE!*

OH, YOU'RE *FUNNY!* FUNNY AS A TACHYON VIOLATING THE *FEINBERG PRINCIPLE!*

SO...IS THAT *FUNNY* OR *NOT* FUNNY?

ACTUALLY, I *KNOW* THE ANSWER. BUT TELL ME THIS...

WE GOT THE *EGOMANIACAL* SCIENTIST, THE *JUST-THE-FACTS* MA'AM SCIENTIST, THE *LOST-IN-HIS-OWN-WORLD* SCIENTIST, AND YOU'RE THE--?

SHUT UP! *SHUT UP! SHUT UP!*

AH! THE TEMPERAMENTAL, *UNSTABLE* SCIENTIST!

GOT IT. THANKS.

DARWIN-- DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE?

HIGHLY LIKELY. BUT *SPECIFICALLY...?*

THAT ROOFTOP *AVIARY*, WHICH WILL BE SHATTERED BY AN ARMY OF MUTATED *CARRIER PIGEONS*...

FZZZHHH!

...VERY SOON!

WHAM!

NOT TODAY, MISS.

AND THAT'S WHEN THINGS GO FROM MANAGEABLE CHAOS...

...TO FREAKIN' OUT OF CONTROL!

BECAUSE WHERE WE LEFT SANDMAN FOR SAFE-KEEPING--WASN'T SO SAFE ANY MORE!

ARRGH--!

SO MUCH... POWER! GETTING... STRONGER!

COLLAR... CAN'T HANDLE IT...MUCH LONGER! AND...WHEN I'M FREE...

THINK I'LL KILL A THIRD OF EVERYONE ON EARTH!

JUST AN IDEA, POPPED INTO MY HEAD!

BAD.

MDM

NOT BAD-- *LEMONS.* TIME TO MAKE *LEMONADE.*

THE *INHIBITOR COLLAR* MARKO'S WEARING *ADAPTS* TO FLUCTUATING POWER LEVELS. RIGHT NOW IT'S TRYING TO *KEEP UP* WITH HIS MUTATION.

IT HAS THE *CAPACITY.* WHAT IT NEEDS IS THE *ENERGY* TO GET *AHEAD* OF THAT BAD BOY AND *SHUT HIM DOWN!* AND IT NEEDS THAT ENERGY *NOW!*

UM... *TESLA?*

HRM. YES. FASCINATING. THEORETICALLY *SOUND* IF SOMEWHAT--

DO IT, MISTER!

YES, SIR!

FZZTAKAKAK!!

ZZZ

UGHH...

KAFKA--?

DON'T TOUCH ME! DON'T TOUCH ME!

EVERYONE ALL RIGHT?

NO. NOT IF BY "EVERYONE" YOU INCLUDE...

...SANDMAN.

OH, HE MIGHT HAVE A LITTLE "DRUNK WITH POWER" HANGOVER WHEN HE COMES TO--BUT HE'LL BE FINE.

PLUS, THE RESIDUAL EFFECTS OF THE INHIBITOR COLLAR OVERLOAD SHOULD LEAVE HIM WITHOUT HIS "UNIQUE SILICIC ABILITIES" FOR, SAY... 24 HOURS?

FUNDAMENTALLY ALTERING THE CHRONAL CONVERGENCE WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT.

HRM. THE EQUATION'S CHANGED... PERHAPS EVEN CEASED TO EXIST. MARKO'S NO LONGER A FACTOR.

EXACTLY AS I PLANNED!

YOU... PLANNED? ARE YOU SAYING YOU KNEW ALL ALONG THIS HAD TO HAPPEN?

THEN WHY ALL THE DANGER AND DRAMA? SURELY THERE WAS AN EASIER WAY--!

SEVENTEEN EASIER WAYS, OFF THE TOP OF MY HEAD. BUT THEY WERE SO PEDESTRIAN AND THIS WAS SO MUCH MORE... REWARDING!

CONTROLLING SO MANY *VARIABLES*... ALMOST *INFINITE* POSSIBILITIES...

YOU TREATED US LIKE *LAB RATS--ALL* OF US!

YOU MACHIAVELLIAN, MANIPULATIVE, *MAD SCIENTIST--!*

YOU'RE *ASTONISHING!*

NO ONE ELSE COULD HAVE HELD TOGETHER SUCH AN ELABORATE PLAN--LET ALONE *ACCOMPLISH* IT!

YES. I MUST AGREE.

SO *THAT'S* WHY YOU CHOSE TESLA, KAFKA AND MYSELF TO ACCOMPANY YOU!

EXACTLY. EVERYONE HAD A SPECIFIC, VITAL ROLE TO PLAY. THE CHRONAL CONVERGENCE WAS A VERY REAL THREAT, AFTER ALL. I'LL BE HAPPY TO GO INTO MORE *DETAIL* WITH YOU, SAY...

TLIK

...OVER *DINNER?*

DID HE--?

WAS THAT--?

I'M PRETTY SURE. YES.

WERE WE JUMPING THROUGH HOOPS JUST SO DARWIN COULD *IMPRESS A GIRL?*

The Next Day.

CAPTAIN AMERICA SAVES CITY!

SPIDER-MAN FREES SANDMAN!

4

WOW-- SO *THAT'S* WHAT HAPPENED! I HAD IT *ALL WRONG*...

...AND I WAS *THERE!*

PROVING ONCE AGAIN WHEN IT COMES TO JJJ--WITH GREAT *POWER* COMES GREAT *IRRESPONSIBILITY*...

I'M AFRAID THAT'S THE PRICE WE PAY FOR A *FREE PRESS.*

YOW!

HOW'D YOU *SNEAK UP* ON ME LIKE THAT? SOME KIND OF STAR-SPANGLED *STEALTH* POWER?

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO DO--TIE THE *LIBERTY BELL* AROUND YOUR NECK?

THAT YOUR *SPIDER-SENSE* DIDN'T WARN YOU I WAS APPROACHING MEANS YOU DON'T CONSIDER ME A *THREAT.*

ACCORDING TO THE *WIKI-ENCYCLOPEDIA.*

THAT'S *WIKIPEDIA.*

DON'T TELL ME THEY SAY THIS IS MY FAVORITE *WATER TOWER* TO SIT ON THE SIDE OF?

OF COURSE NOT. THEY SAY THAT'S ON THE *UPPER WEST SIDE*...AND THAT I WAS ACTIVE IN THE 1950'S. CAN'T BELIEVE *EVERYTHING* YOU READ.

NO--I FOUND YOU THROUGH GOOD OLD-FASHIONED *LEGWORK* THIS TIME.

ONCE I SAW THOSE *HEADLINES...*

EH. ISN'T THE *FIRST* TIME, WON'T BE THE LAST...

WELL, MAYBE WE CAN *DO* SOMETHING ABOUT THAT...

I'LL CALL A *NEWS CONFERENCE*, MAKE A *PUBLIC STATEMENT* IN YOUR DEFENSE--WITH *YOU* STANDING NEXT TO ME.

THAT SHOULD CHANGE SOME MINDS.

THAT... THAT'S VERY *GENEROUS*, CAP, BUT...

BUT IT COULD *BACKFIRE.* INSTEAD OF HIM PULLING ME *UP*, I COULD PULL HIM *DOWN.*

THAT'S WHAT SPIDERS *DO*--GET THINGS TANGLED IN THEIR *WEB.*

...BUT I'D HAVE TO STAND NEXT TO YOU A *LONG TIME* TO WIN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF *ANYONE.*

LET ALONE *NEW YORKERS!*

SO THANKS, BUT...

...JUST *THANKS.* THAT YOU'D *DO* THAT... THAT YOU'D EVEN *OFFER...*

IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER WHAT ANYONE *ELSE* THINKS OF ME.

I'M NOT GOING TO GET A BETTER *EXIT* LINE.

AND IF I STAY MUCH LONGER...I MIGHT *CHANGE* MY MIND.

STILL CAN'T BELIEVE I ACTUALLY MET *CAPTAIN AMERICA!* AND HE SHOOK MY *HAND!* EVEN *TEAMED UP* WITH ME!

UNCLE BEN WOULD BE *PROUD.*

ON THE OTHER HAND, CAP PALS AROUND WITH MILLIONAIRES, PRESIDENTS... *NORSE GODS...*

...I DOUBT MEETING *ME* WILL LEAVE ANY *LASTING* IMPRESSION.

AMAZING.

AND PEOPLE THINK HE'S NO BETTER THAN A CRIMINAL LIKE *SANDMAN.*

HE CAN'T BE THE *ONLY* ONE LIKE THAT--MISTRUSTED, MISUNDERSTOOD. I CAN'T HELP *HIM,* BUT MAYBE I COULD HELP...

THERE YOU GO *AGAIN,* ROGERS--THINKING YOU CAN SOLVE THE WORLD'S PROBLEMS *YOURSELF!*

EVEN IF I COULD *FIND* HEROES WHO DESERVE A FRESH START, SPIDER-MAN'S *RIGHT*--WE'D HAVE TO WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE FOR WHO KNOWS *HOW* LONG TO CHANGE THE PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION.

I SIMPLY WOULDN'T HAVE *TIME* FOR THAT, WITH MY *AVENGERS* COMMITMENTS.

UNLESS...

UNLESS THEY *WERE* AVENGERS...

The End!

TO SEE THE RESULTS OF CAP'S BRAINSTORM, CHECK OUT EVERY ISSUE OF THE AVENGERS SINCE #16!

DIDJA MISS US?!

BACK... BY WACK-ULAR DEMAND!

I'LL NEVER KNOW HOW I GET MYSELF INTO THESE THINGS.

NO, THAT'S NOT FAIR. I KNOW EXACTLY HOW I GOT INTO THIS ONE --

Stan Lee DOES *MORE* THAN PRESENT...

"MAKE MINE MARVEL!"

AN UNTOLD TALE OF SPIDER-MAN!

FROM OUT OF THE PAST!

KURT BUSIEK WRITIST

PAT OLLIFFE ARTER

STEVE BUCCELLATO COLORIST

COMICRAFT LETTERER

THOMAS BRENNAN ASSISTANT WACKER

STEPHEN WACKER WACKER

HEY! HEY, COME LOOK!

I WAS IN LOWER MANHATTAN, HOPING TO LINE UP A SUMMER JOB ASSISTING MY OLD EMPLOYER **DR. COBBWELL**, TO ADD TO WHAT I GET TAKING PHOTOS FOR THE BUGLE --

IT'S SPIDER-MAN!

AND HE'S FIGHTING --

-- THE HUMAN TOP!

NICE TRY, WEBS --

-- BUT YOU'VE GOTTA BE FASTER THAN THAT IF YOU WANT TO GET A GRIP ON A SPINNING TOP!

-- BUT WHEN I GOT THERE, THE TOP WAS ROBBING THE PLACE, STEALING AN EXPERIMENTAL CYCLOTRON WORTH MAJOR BUCKS ON THE BLACK MARKET.

I TRIED TO STOP HIM, BUT --

NAH, THAT WON'T DO. I NEED A NEW NAME -- SOMETHING CATCHY.

MR. CYCLONE? THE GREEN TORNADO? VIC VORTEX?

HOW 'BOUT WALLY WINDBAG?

'CAUSE IT TAKES A LITTLE MORE THAN THAT TO GET AWAY FROM ME, TOO!

OH?

WH -- ?

HEY!

YOU MANIAC!

THERE'S PEOPLE IN THERE!

WHAT ABOUT THIS, THEN? IS THIS ENOUGH?

THERE WASN'T ANY TIME TO THINK. I JUST STARTED THWIPPING OUT WEBS, AS FAST AS MY WEB-SHOOTERS COULD MANAGE, AND --

THWIPP WIP WIP WIPPP

THWIPP

THUNGG

UHH!

HA! THERE'S YOUR PROBLEM *RIGHT THERE* -- YOU LET YOURSELF GET *DISTRACTED*, WHILE I TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS!

NOW BEFORE YOU CAN *REACH* ME, I'LL BE TOO FAR AWAY TO --

YEAH?

AND YOUR PROBLEM'S BEING *CALLOUS, MURDEROUS SCUM* -- AND A *KNOTHEAD BESIDES!*

FRANKLY...

HUH?

...I LIKE MY PROBLEM BETTER!

THAT TEARS IT!

I WAS ONLY PLAYING WITH YOU BEFORE, SPIDER-MAN! BUT NOW YOU'VE EARNED THE WRATH OF -- OF --

TO BE HONEST, THE SPEED HE WAS MOVING, IT WAS A LUCKY SHOT. BUT I GOT IT, AND --

MR. SPINNY GUY? DIZZY DAN? THE ROTATOR?

WH -- ?

I MEAN, YOU WANT TO STICK AROUND AND TANGO, THAT'S FINE --

-- MY WEBS'LL DISSOLVE IN AN HOUR, AND I'M SURE THERE WON'T BE ZILLIONS OF COPS AROUND BY THEN!

GNAH! YOU HAVEN'T HEARD THE LAST OF ME, HERO! YOU'LL PAY FOR THAT!

SURE, SURE...

... JUST LET ME KNOW WHO TO MAKE THE CHECK OUT TO, NAMELESS!

I WISH I COULD HAVE GONE AFTER HIM, BUT I HAD TO CHECK ON THE MEN IN THE CAB. BESIDES, THAT WAS THE LAST OF MY WEBBING...!

YOU'RE OKAY, MAC. JUST A LITTLE SHOOK UP.

AB. AB DAB AB...

AND YOU, SIR?

ME? COULDN'T BE BETTER, SPIDEY.

I SHOULD DO THAT EVERY MORNING -- BETTER THAN THREE CUPS OF COFFEE AND A FIRE ALARM FOR GETTING THE BLOOD PUMPING, I'LL TELL YOU!

GLAD I WAS WEARING MY SEAT BELT, THOUGH.

YOU, AH, DON'T SEEM TOO UPSET AT BEING THROWN THROUGH THE AIR, MR....

CALL ME STAN.

AND IN MY LINE OF WORK -- AND CONSIDERING WHO I WAS COMING TO MEET -- I'VE GOT TO LEARN TO TAKE THINGS LIKE THAT IN STRIDE.

WHO YOU WERE COMING TO MEET...?

RIGHT BEHIND YOU, SON.

HUH?

HEY, SPIDER-MAN! THANKS FOR TACKLING THE TOP FOR US! IF YOU WANT TO TAKE OFF BEFORE THE POLICE GET HERE --

-- WE'LL GUARD THE DEVICE FOR YOU!

DON'T MIND HER -- A WASP'S NATURAL ANTIPATHY TOWARD SPIDERS, THAT'S ALL IT IS!

HMPH! WE DIDN'T NEED *HIS* HELP! WE'D HAVE CAUGHT THE TOP JUST *FINE* ON OUR OWN!

DOUBLE-HMPH!

GIANT-MAN. AND THE *WASP.*

AND RIGHT *BEHIND* THEM, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BET...

H'RAY, GIANT-MAN! H'RAY!

WE LOVE GIANT-MAN!

YEAH!

GM

GM

OUR GM BADGE

... THE GIANT-MAN *FAN CLUB.*

I KNEW IT. I JUST *KNEW* IT...

HM? YOU DON'T *LIKE* GIANT-MAN?

GIANT MAN FAN

NO, NO, OF COURSE I DO. HE'S A *GREAT GUY.*

IT'S JUST -- I NEVER SEEM TO GET ANY *BREAKS,* AND HERE *HE* IS, WORLD-FAMOUS, AN *AVENGER,* GOT HIS OWN *FAN CLUB* --

-- EVEN HIS OWN *COMIC BOOK DEAL,* FOR PETE'S SAKE!

WELL, NOW. I CAN'T GET YOU INTO THE *AVENGERS* --

-- BUT SEEING AS YOU JUST *SAVED MY LIFE* AND ALL -- I MAY JUST BE ABLE TO HELP YOU OUT WITH THAT *LAST ONE* -- !

AND SURE ENOUGH, HE COULD. I'D MANAGED TO SNAP SOME PICS, SO I DEVELOPED THEM, DROPPED THEM OFF AT THE BUGLE --

PETER! PETER!

-- AND BY THE TIME I GOT HOME TO FOREST HILLS AGAIN --

...AND IN LOCAL NEWS, STAN LEE, THE EDITOR AND HEAD WRITER AT MARVEL COMICS, ANNOUNCED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY...

I DON'T BELIEVE IT. I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

"...A SPANKING-NEW COMIC SERIES, STARRING NEW YORK'S OWN WEB-SLINGING WONDER -- THE ALWAYS-AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

"AND JUST LIKE OUR FABULOUS F.F. AND ASTONISHING AVENGERS MAGS --

"-- IT'S FULLY-AUTHORIZED, AND WILL BE PRODUCED WITH THE COOPERATION AND INPUT OF THE WONDROUS WALL-CRAWLER HIMSELF!

"SEE THE ADVENTURES -- AS ONLY SPIDEY CAN TELL THEM! IT'LL BE THE BIGGEST --"

WHAT IS IT, AUNT MAY? A NEW BINGO TAX? THEY'RE OUTLAWING THOSE SKATEBOARD STUNTS YOU LOVE TO DO?

OHHH! THAT AWFUL SPIDER-MAN! HOW CAN THAT MAN LIONIZE HIM LIKE THAT -- TREAT HIM LIKE HE'S A HERO?!

IF I COULD HAVE PREPARED HER, I WOULD HAVE -- BUT HOW WOULD PETER PARKER BE EXPECTED TO KNOW?

BESIDES, I DIDN'T EXPECT STAN TO ANNOUNCE IT ON TV. WHAT A HAM!

I NEVER DID LIKE THOSE FUNNY-BOOKS, ANYWAY! I USED TO READ THEY CAUSE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY, AND LET ME TELL YOU, YOUNG MAN --

I DIDN'T HEAR ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE, ALL NIGHT.

AND THE NEXT DAY...

MIDTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

TELL YOU WHAT, GANG...

...WHEN THE *FIRST ISSUE'S* OUT? *I'M* GONNA TRACK DOWN *SPIDEY HIMSELF* -- GET HIM TO *SIGN* IT FOR ME!

REALLY?

COOL!

WHEN'LL IT BE OUT?

SPIDER-MAN WAS *HERE*, AT OUR SCHOOL! WILL *THAT* BE IN IT?

WILL *WE* BE IN IT?

*FLASH THOMPSON HAD **ALWAYS** BEEN A SPIDEY-BOOSTER, SO THAT DIDN'T SURPRISE ME. BUT THE **OTHER** KIDS, THEY WERE EXCITED, TOO.*

*AND I STARTED TO THINK -- THIS COULD BE REALLY **BIG** FOR ME. COULD MAYBE TURN EVERYTHING **AROUND**...!*

AND WORK...

DAILY BUGLE

...OUGHT TO BE A LAW!

...WELL, THAT WASN'T A SURPRISE.

AND MAYBE THERE WILL BE! MAYBE THERE JUST WILL!

THIS IS UNCONSCIONABLE -- UNCONSCIONABLE! MARVEL COMICS SHAPES IMPRESSIONABLE MINDS, AND TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS...

THEY'LL BE HEARING A THING OR TWO ABOUT IT, BELIEVE YOU ME! THEY WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM!

FOSWELL, URICH, IN MY OFFICE! WHERE'S SHELDON?

LET ME *GUESS*. HE'S BEEN LIKE THIS THE WHOLE *DAY*.

YOU *KNOW* IT. SPIDER-MAN, SPIDER-MAN, SPIDER-MAN. *NON*-STOP.

TWO EDITORIALS SO FAR, AND HE'S TORN BOTH UP, WANTS TO MAKE THEM *"HIT HARDER."*

HE'S TALKING ABOUT DOING A WHOLE *EXTRA EDITION* ABOUT IT.

DAILY BUGLE
TWISTS FALL OUT
Spider-Man, Human Top Clash Over Stolen Comics

NOT TO WORRY, BETTY. HE'LL GET *OVER* IT.

ONE BIG *NATURAL DISASTER*, OR A JUICY *POLITICAL* SCANDAL, SOMETHING THAT MAKES THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE *MISERABLE* --

-- AND HE'LL BE GRINNING LIKE A *GREAT WHITE* AGAIN IN NO TIME. I MEAN, IT'S COMIC BOOKS, RIGHT?

IT'S ONLY *COMIC BOOKS.*

IF I'D ONLY KNOWN.

BUT I DIDN'T.

SO A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER, I WAS HEADED FOR MIDTOWN, HAPPY AS A PROPORTIONAL-STRENGTH-OF-A-SPIDER CLAM...

NOK NOK

SPIDEY!

GLAD YOU COULD *MAKE* IT, TIGER! MOST PEOPLE USE THE *DOOR*, THOUGH...

"TIGER"...?

AND *LO*, EFFENDI, HERE WE *ARE!*

THIS IS IT -- THE *NERVE CENTER* OF THE MIGHTY MARVEL OPERATION, FROM *AWESOME ART* TO *LILTIN' LETTERING!* HERE'S WHERE IT ALL *HAPPENS!*

HEADS *UP*, PEONS -- THERE'S A CELEBRITY IN OUR RANKS! LET ME PRESENT TO YOU OUR NEWEST *SENSATIONAL SUPERSTAR*, THE ONE-AND-ONLY --

UM, STAN?

I THINK YOU SHOULD *SEE* THIS...

UH.

THANKS, FLO.

DAILY BUGLE

NEW YORK'S FINEST DAILY NEWSPAPER

CORRUPTION OF THE INNOCENT

What Are Comic Books Teaching Your Children?

WHAT? IS THIS A *PROBLEM?*

NO, NO -- ONCE, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN, BUT *TODAY?* IF THAT *BRISTLE-TOPPED* BOZO WANTS A FIGHT, HE'LL *GET* ONE!

HMM. *"BRISTLE-TOPPED BOZO."* THAT'S WORTH *USING* SOMEWHERE...

DON'T *WORRY* ABOUT IT. JUST STEP INTO MY -- OH, YOU'RE ALREADY IN.

HAVE A *CHAIR,* IF YOU LIKE.

I'M FINE *HERE.* HOW DO WE START?

JUST A FEW *QUESTIONS.*

SHOOT.

OKAY, FIRST OFF, I GOTTA GET TO *KNOW* YOU. JUST WHO *ARE* YOU, UNDER THAT MASK?

WHAT?! I *CAN'T TELL YOU THAT!*

IF YOU KNEW MY REAL NAME, IT'D --

EASY, *EASY!* WE'D NEVER *PUBLISH* YOUR SECRET IDENTITY. BUT, THEN -- WHAT SORT OF THING DO YOU *DO* WHEN YOU'RE NOT WEB-SLINGING?

SCIENTIST? ATHLETE? GOVERNMENT AGENT?

UM.

CAN I... *PASS* ON THAT FOR NOW?

SURE. AN *EASIER* ONE, THEN.

THOSE WEB-SHOOTERS. ARE THEY *PART* OF YOU? ARE THEY *GADGETS?* HOW DO THEY WORK?

UM...

-SIGH-

THE *ADVENTURES*, THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING. THE *AUTHENTICITY*, THE ACCURACY. TELL ME ABOUT, SAY, THE *LIZARD*, THE *VULTURE*...

HOW'D YOU *BEAT* THEM?

I, AH, CAN'T REALLY --

LOOK, ARE YOU *SURE* YOU'RE *SPIDER-MAN?*

I'M *SORRY*, I JUST...

WHAT I *DO*, HOW MY POWERS WORK, HOW I *OVERCAME* SOME OF THESE GUYS -- IF THOSE WERE PUBLIC, IT COULD MEAN *TROUBLE*.

COULD I... *THINK* ABOUT SOME OF THIS?

OF COURSE, OF *COURSE!*

THIS IS ALL *NEW* TO YOU, IT'S ONLY *NATURAL!*

YOU JUST TAKE SOME *TIME*, GET COMFORTABLE WITH WHAT YOU'RE WILLING TO SHARE. I'LL HAVE THE *LICENSING DEAL* DRAWN UP IN A DAY OR TWO.

THANKS.

SO HOW DO WE *CONTACT* YOU?

UM...

IT'S OKAY. NO PRESSURE.

YOU JUST DROP BY *HERE* IN A FEW DAYS, OKAY? WE'RE NOTHING IF NOT *ACCOMMODATING*, HERE AT MIGHTY MARVEL!

I WAS THINKING ABOUT HOW EVEN DETAILS ON HOW I BEAT SOMEONE MIGHT EXPOSE MY SCIENCE SKILLS, LET PEOPLE TRACK ME DOWN.

OR LET THE LIZARD DEFEAT MY ANTIDOTE, OR MAKE TROUBLE FOR HIS FAMILY.

SO WHEN MY SPIDER-SENSE WENT OFF --

SMASH!

UHH!

HA!

I *KNEW* WHEN I SAW THOSE TV REPORTS, I COULD JUST *STAKE* THIS PLACE OUT --

NO -- NOT HERE --

AHP -- !

-- AND YOU'D BE A *SITTING DUCK FOR THE REVENGE OF THE DEADLY DERVISH!*

OR, UH, *PINWHEEL?*

NO! DON'T!

BE CAREFUL!

I NEED THOSE SCRIPTS! AND THAT ART -- IT HASN'T GONE TO THE ENGRAVER YET!

WATCH OUT FOR --

STAN! ARE YOU CRAZY? GET BACK HERE!

BUT I --

AND FOR HEAVEN'S SAKES, GET DOWN!

HOW ABOUT MR. SCARY-GO-ROUND?

OR MAJOR MAYPOLE? OR -- HNNH!

HAH!

STILL NOT FAST ENOUGH! NO ONE IS!

NOT TO TAG ME!

WHOK

I REALIZED -- HE WAS FAST, BUT COCKY. HE DIDN'T REALLY KNOW WHAT MY SPIDER-SPEED WAS CAPABLE OF.

IF I CONCENTRATED -- PUT ALL MY EFFORT INTO ONE MOVE --

DID IT! GOT YOU!

GOT ME?

THWIPP

LOOKS TO ME LIKE *I'VE* GOT *YOU!*

I'LL PULL YOU IN *CLOSE ENOUGH* TO FINISH YOU OFF --

-- AND *SCATTER YOUR REMAINS ALL OVER MANHATTAN!*

THANKS... FOR THE OFFER OF A WHIRLWIND TOUR...

... BUT... PULLING ME IN CLOSE ENOUGH...

STRANGE TALES

AVENGERS

...WAS EXACTLY WHAT I WAS HOPING FOR!

KWOK

UHHHHH...

WHIRLWIND... GOOD NAME... BUT N-NEXT TIME...

... HELMET...

WHMPP

AND LIKE THAT...

I, AH...

...I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY...

WELL, *THAT'S* A FIRST.

...IT WAS OVER.

AND NOT JUST THE **FIGHT.**

I'D **LED** HIM THERE. PUT **EVERYONE** IN DANGER. SET **JONAH** ON THEM, RISKED THEIR BUSINESS, EVEN IF I HADN'T **INTENDED** TO...

AND FOR **WHAT?** FOR NOT ANSWERING QUESTIONS? FOR BEING SO SECRETIVE THEY'D BE GETTING PRACTICALLY **NOTHING** FROM ME?

IT WASN'T FAIR.

STAN, FLO, EVERYONE...

I'M REALLY ***SORRY*** ABOUT ALL THIS. THE MESS, THE DAMAGE, THE NEWSPAPER... ***EVERYTHING.*** WE'D BETTER ***CALL IT OFF.***

NO DEAL IS WORTH ***THIS.***

HUH?

...AND WE COULD SET UP *DROP-BOXES*...

HE DIDN'T **QUIT.**

HE HAD ALL THESE IDEAS ON HOW TO **MINIMIZE** *THE DANGER. I WAS IMPRESSED WITH HIS WILLINGNESS TO* **FIGHT**, *BUT --*

SORRY, STAN...

...BUT IF ANYONE GOT ***HURT*** -- I JUST CAN'T TAKE THAT ***CHANCE.***

THANKS FOR THE ***OFFER***, THOUGH!

SO... WHAT ***NOW?***

CLEAN UP THE ***PLACE***, GET BACK TO WORK...

I MEAN THE ***SPIDER-MAN*** BOOK.

YOU ***ANNOUNCED*** IT, IT'S ALREADY UNDER WAY...

WE CAN ***STILL*** DO THE COMIC -- HE ***IS*** A PUBLIC FIGURE. WE'LL HAVE TO BASE IT ON ***NEWS REPORTS*** AND SO FORTH. NOT WHAT WE'D ***HOPED*** FOR...

...BUT YOU DO WHAT YOU CAN WITH WHAT YOU ***GOT***, RIGHT?

AND THAT'S HOW IT ALL **HAPPENED.**

HOW I GAVE THE HUMAN TOP HIS NEW **NAME**, *HOW I GAVE JONAH A NEW* **CRUSADE**, *GAVE MARVEL COMICS A NEW* **COMIC** -- *BASED ON* **BUGLE ARTICLES** *ABOUT ME, NO LESS --*

AND WHAT DID I GET OUT OF IT? **NOTHING**, *JUST LIKE USUAL.*

BUT I CAN HANG ON TO **ONE** *SMALL THING, AT LEAST...*

I NEVER DID SIGN FLASH'S COPY OF THE FIRST ISSUE!

THE UNTOLD END

DARK REIGN: THE LIST — AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1 VILLAIN VARIANT
BY FRANK CHO

DARK REIGN: THE LIST — AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1 HERO VARIANT
BY FRANK CHO

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #612 BLACK CAT VARIANT

BY ED McGUINNESS

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #613 VILLAIN VARIANT

BY JOE QUINONES

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #615 VILLAIN VARIANT

BY JOE QUINONES

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #617 VILLAIN VARIANT
BY JOE QUINONES

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #618 VILLAIN VARIANT

BY JOE QUINONES

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #623 VILLAIN VARIANT

BY JOE QUINONES

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #623 VARIANT
BY JOE JUSKO

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #624 VARIANT
BY PASQUAL FERRY & FABIO D'AURIA

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #620 DEADPOOL VARIANT

BY PASQUAL FERRY & FABIO D'AURIA

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #5 DEADPOOL VARIANT
BY PHIL JIMENEZ & CHRIS CHUCKRY

SPIDER-MAN RUNS THE GAUNTLET IN A SAGA THAT REDEFINES HIS CLASSIC ARCHENEMIES!

The violent tension between Spidey and Norman Osborn builds to a boil! Electro becomes the voice of the common man against the brutal injustice of a system overloaded by greed! When one of Peter Parker's closest friends is on the brink of ruin, all clues point to the sinister Sandman! The Rhino charges in for a heartbreaking story of love, loss and lust for power! Mysterio is back from the dead — and he's not alone! Peter Parker meets the new Vulture — but who is he, and why does he prey on the city's criminals? And Morbius, the Living Vampire, is out for blood!

Collecting *Dark Reign: The List — Amazing Spider-Man*, *Amazing Spider-Man (1999) #612-626* and *Annual #37*, and material from *Web of Spider-Man (2009) #2-5* — written by Dan Slott, Mark Waid, Fred Van Lente, Joe Kelly, Greg Weisman, Tom Peyer, Karl Kesel and Kurt Busiek; and illustrated by Adam Kubert, Paul Azaceta, Javier Pulido, Max Fiumara, Marcos Martin, Michael Lark, Luke Ross, Michael Gaydos, Paulo Siqueira, Barry Kitson and more.

MARVEL

ZONE